

Inspiring children and young people’s career journeys through work-related experiences

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1 Introduction

'Work-related experiences' refers to the full range of learning opportunities that use the world of work as a resource, context and environment to enhance the personal, social, educational and career development of children and young people.

The Career Development Institute was asked by the Welsh Government to carry out a brief literature review and consultation with key stakeholders to identify good practice recommendations for inspiring children and young people's career journeys through work-related experiences. This report is based on analysis of recent and older good practice tested in the past from over 40 international, UK-wide and Welsh sources, a snapshot survey of work experience students in one school and 10 interviews with stakeholders carried out in February and March 2023. The latter involved staff in Welsh Government, Careers Wales, schools, a local authority and a Regional Skills Partnership.

It is hoped that the recommendations in this report will stimulate debate about best practice in work-related experiences which can be discussed with interested parties and help to inform future policy options that could be presented to ministers.

2 Executive Summary

'Work-related experiences' refers to the full range of learning opportunities that use the world of work as a resource, context and environment to enhance the personal, social, educational and career development of children and young people.

This report is based on analysis of recent and older good practice tested in the past from over 40 international, UK-wide and Welsh sources, a snapshot survey of work experience students in one school and 10 interviews with stakeholders carried out in February and March 2023. The latter involved staff in Welsh Government, Careers Wales, schools, a local authority and a Regional Skills Partnership.

Current context

At the national level, the Welsh Government has a vision for a globally responsible, prosperous, resilient, healthier Wales with more equal cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Through collaboration, the innovation strategy for a Stronger, Fairer, Greener Wales aims to bring about better jobs, improved health and care services, a greener environment and a more prosperous economy (Welsh Government, 2023). These policies reflect the heightened interest in strengthening the contribution that work-related experiences can make to achieving these goals. Regional Skills Partnerships, local authorities and employers are also active in promoting initiatives to develop higher level skills in the workforce and to support priority sectors of the economy such as IT, energy and health.

The education system is undergoing fundamental reform with the roll-out of the Curriculum for Wales from September 2022. One of its four purposes is raising children and young people to be enterprising and creative contributors who are ready to play a full part in life and work. Careers and Work-Related Experiences (CWRE), a cross-cutting theme in the curriculum for 3-16-year-olds, is central to this ambition. Schools are beginning to implement CWRE in the curriculum with the support of their business and community partners. Alongside the new curriculum, qualifications are changing. Qualifications Wales is consulting on proposals for a new Integral Skills Project qualification, life and work skills units/qualifications and pre-vocational qualifications.

The capacity of schools to provide their usual programme of work-related experiences was adversely affected by the Covid pandemic but is now recovering. During the pandemic, schools became adept at providing virtual experiences and interest continues in how to use virtual and hybrid experiences to complement face-to-face provision.

Since 2013, Careers Wales has existed as a wholly owned subsidiary of the Welsh Government with a remit set by the Minister for Economy. Careers Wales vision *Brighter Futures 2021*, a five-year strategy to transform the contribution that they make to the health of the people, society and economy. The 2022-23 operational plan highlights the important role that Careers Wales plays in offering universal, selective and bespoke services to schools that facilitate education-business links.

Work-related experiences: Insights from research

The analysis of research and grey literature focused on the part that work-related experiences plays in wider education-business partnerships (see Table Two), the range of

work-related experiences in the curriculum (see Table Three), the objectives for work-related experiences (see Table Four) and the outcomes of work-related experiences. This analysis has practical applications in the development of new curriculum planning and recording tools for schools to use. It further highlights the positive benefits of work-related experiences. The evidence base in support of this assertion is growing with most studies assessed as moderate to good. Work or work placement experience is the most widely studied activity but recent reports from Arad Research, The Careers & Enterprise Company and OECD have illuminated effective provision across the full range of work-related experiences. Work-related experiences have most impact when:

- Activities are embedded in the curriculum and co-curriculum.
- Activities are planned to provide a balanced, coherent and progressive programme of work-related experiences.
- Pupils are well-prepared beforehand and debriefed afterwards.
- Good communication is maintained between schools and businesses.
- Outcomes are evaluated.

Conclusions and recommendations

The research for this report has identified five main priority areas that are key to improving the provision for inspiring children and young people's career journeys through experiences of work.

1. The infrastructure of support to schools and businesses

Careers Wales is generally highly regarded by schools for its professionalism and consistency of services. It is well-placed through its Business Engagement Advisers, Careers Advisers and CWRE Teams to strengthen the infrastructure of support to schools and businesses. Its role as a provider of universal and selective services but also as an enabler and facilitator of bespoke services needs to grow to meet the challenges ahead. Partnership agreements with schools and strategic partnerships with businesses and other providers are highly effective mechanisms for managing work-related experiences. Extending the remit of Careers Wales will require an increase in resources even allowing for a possible remodelling of some of its other services (especially following the loss of short-term projects). Even so, steps will need to be taken to mitigate risks such as demand for their services from schools outstripping capacity, innovative services proving financially unsustainable and handling the stresses associated with the management of change. The list of initiatives in the 2022-23 operational plan is already impressive, but their role could further include:

- increasing the support for schools with primary age children to implement CWRE in the Curriculum for Wales.
- Co-ordinating and expanding pre- and post-16 work placement experience provision. Schools would particularly welcome the restoration of a free vetting service. This could be managed directly by the Business Engagement Advisers Team, but also sub-contracted to approved organisations that already provide a service in some areas. Developing new work experience guidelines for schools and businesses will help them follow legal and insurance requirements but also improve quality and standards.
- Developing more new resources, materials and activities, in partnership with schools and businesses. A curated and up to date online directory of curriculum resources, case studies and new projects, challenges and competitions would be welcomed by schools.

- Running new pilot programmes which if successful could be extended nationally, e.g. a digital passport, digital CWRE badges, an e-portfolio pilot scheme, and programmes for more able and talented (MAT) pupils.
- Publishing a second edition of the CWRE toolkit and toolbox with resources and materials to help curriculum managers in schools design, implement and review their provision of work-related experiences.

2. Quality and standards

The Welsh Government has issued a CWRE 3-16 toolkit and toolbox for schools and Careers Wales are developing a new Careers Wales Quality Award. Careers Wales also runs an annual Valued Partner Awards scheme including an award for the most supportive work experience employer. These contribute to improving quality and raising standards. Issuing updated guidance to schools and business on running effective work placement experience schemes will also help. Other options include:

- Strengthening the criteria relating to work-related experiences in the Quality Award under development.
- Developing a work placement experience quality award.
- Offering training for teaching and administrative staff involved in running work placement experience schemes.
- Developing the role of business engagement advisers in supporting local clusters and networks of schools to manage work-related experiences and education-business partnerships in their areas more effectively.
- Asking Estyn to carry out a thematic review of work-related experiences provision in schools.
- Developing a research agenda. Literature reviews have exposed the under-researched aspects of work-related experiences. It would be useful to develop a programme of research to illuminate best and emerging next practice.

3. The range of work-related experiences

Work placement experience is the most well-known activity, but some other types of work-related experiences are less well-evidenced in Welsh schools. Schools should be encouraged to investigate other activities and how they can benefit their pupils. Business mentors or role models, for example, can motivate and engage pupils especially at key stage 4. Younger pupils, but also older ones, can benefit from work observation and job shadowing which can be delivered virtually, face to face or in combination. Business challenges, including those modelled on popular TV formats, can also be very successful.

4. Outcomes and impact

A strong focus on meaning and impact helps ensure that the experiences planned are relevant, pedagogically sound and produce worthwhile outcomes.

Assessing the outcomes of pupils' participation in work-related experiences needs to be an integral part of the learning process so that it provides evidence of the effectiveness of the provision and informs what pupils need to learn next.

An approach which may be worth piloting with a group of schools is based on pupils having a CWRE e-portfolio. E-portfolio learning is based on the principles of collecting, selecting and reflecting. Pupils collect evidence of what they have learnt, select the best examples

and reflect on what they did and what they will do better next time. An e-portfolio is also an output that they can share with staff (e.g. tutors) and use selected data within it to present themselves when making applications. A digital passport with younger learners could also be worth piloting to encourage a breadth of awareness.

Pupils also enjoy celebrating their experiences and achievements. Accredited outcomes such as units and qualifications offered by awarding bodies in life and work skills and the work-related component of the Welsh Baccalaureate are important ways of improving outcomes. It is worth considering the contribution that digital badges (discussed below) could make to recognising and recording pupils' experiences and achievements. Digital badges could be stored in a pupil's e-portfolio.

5. Innovation

Innovation is not always successful. The response to the Speakers for Schools virtual work experience initiative, for example, was disappointing. Much depends on timing, costs and the capacity of schools, businesses and partner agencies to change their practice; but innovation in relation to work-related experiences will help to inspire learners. Ideas for new developments include:

- Primary schools need help with implementing CWRE. It would be helpful to all schools if a pilot group of schools worked with Careers Wales and local businesses to develop and publish a range of classroom teaching resources and materials linked to the areas of learning and experience. There is also an opportunity to encourage commercial publishers to produce CWRE resources and materials geared to the new curriculum.
- Pupils going through the school system now will face the consequences of the climate and environment emergency. One of the responses open to them is to embrace sustainable living and working, but high-quality information, resources and activities to help them are hard to find. Collaboration between schools, businesses and Careers Wales to develop 'net zero' games, simulations, projects and challenges can inspire children and young people's career journeys.
- Inspiring young people to broaden their horizons using gamification techniques, Careers Wales should continue to further develop the Careers Wales CareersCraft.
- Digital badges have the potential to strengthen the outcomes and impact of pupils' participation in work-related experiences. A pilot scheme with schools, businesses, Careers Wales and one or more awarding bodies to develop the use of digital badges could have a big impact on the career development of 14-18-year-olds. (A digital passport could be trialled with younger pupils). Developing a suite of work placement and work experience badges that focus on sectors of the economy that are important for the future prosperity of Wales would be attractive to local authorities and regional skills partnerships.

Concluding remarks

The current development in careers and work-related experiences have the potential to create a world class careers and work-related education system. Strong relationships between schools, businesses and the pan-Wales careers service combined with the radical, enabling reforms to the curriculum and qualifications create the ideal conditions for innovation and improvement to thrive.

3 Current context

Providing work-related experiences in the curriculum for children and young people expanded rapidly in the 1970s and 1980s; but progress has not been continuous. Estyn (2020) noted a decline after 2015 associated with the ending of Careers Wales's remit to provide a work experience service to schools. Further decline has been linked to the Covid pandemic as schools prioritise learners' recovery from other curriculum deficits. Covid did act as a catalyst for delivering virtual and hybrid work-related learning experiences and this is continuing alongside face-to-face activities. Schools still cite lack of time, especially for administrative tasks, budget constraints and competing priorities as ongoing difficulties.

Welsh Government

The commitment and investment in work-related experiences needs to be viewed in the context of the Welsh Government's aspirations to build a strong economy and society. At the heart of this aspiration is a vision for a globally responsible, prosperous, resilient, healthier Wales with more equal cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Through collaboration, the innovation strategy launched in February 2023 aims to bring about better jobs, improved health and care services, a greener environment and a more prosperous economy (Welsh Government, 2023). These policies explain the heightened interest in the contribution that work-related experiences can make to achieving these aims. Regional Skills Partnerships, local authorities and employers are also active in promoting initiatives to develop higher level skills in the workforce and to support priority sectors of the economy such as IT, energy and health.

Implementing the Curriculum for Wales.

Careers and Work-Related Experiences (CWRE) is a cross-cutting theme in the new curriculum designed to be embedded in all areas of learning and experience. Work-related experiences contribute to career development as well as having a role in facilitating economic and industrial understanding and authentic learning across the whole curriculum. They are an integral part of CWRE and it would be unhelpful to schools to treat them as an entirely separate construct. To this end, Careers Wales (2022a, 2022b) has published a CWRE toolkit and toolbox based on the design principles of the new curriculum. The toolkit puts quality at the heart of CWRE by identifying six dimensions of quality all of which relate to the effectiveness of work-related learning provision (See Table One).

Work-related experiences have the potential to motivate learners by using the world of work as a relevant and realistic resource, context and environment for curriculum learning. The new curriculum is also an opportunity to extend the traditional focus of education-business activities on 14-16-year-olds across the whole of the 3-16 phase. This will allow a more considered approach to curriculum issues of sequencing, progression, coherence and comprehensive coverage.

Table One: The effectiveness of work-related learning provision

Dimension of quality	Relevance to the quality of work-related experiences
Leading the development of CWRE in the school	Work-related experiences benefit from having a lead member of staff with sufficient time and resources to develop provision including appropriate administrative support
Realising CWRE in the curriculum	Work-related experiences should be integrated in the curriculum rather than stand-alone and bolted on. Co-curriculum activities which complement and enrich pupils' learning are an important part of work-related learning provision
Implementing effective learning and teaching in CWRE	Work-related experiences make extensive use of active, participative and experiential learning approaches which are highly motivating and take the learning deeper
Supporting professional learning in CWRE	Professional learning opportunities are essential for staff to develop the confidence and the competence to facilitate children and young people's learning through work-related experiences. Methods include inviting business leaders to participate in school in-service training programmes, teacher placements and training to deliver specific activities.
Co-constructing CWRE	Working in partnership with key stakeholders enhances the delivery of work-related experiences. Parents can take their children to work, talk about and demonstrate the work they do and help staff on visits. Employers and staff can jointly plan activities for children and young people such as carousel talks, business simulations, enterprise challenges, careers fairs and 'mock' interviews.
Demonstrating impact in CWRE	Work-related experiences can have a range of impacts which provide evidence of the benefits of CWRE. The measurement of impact and outcomes is complex but the accumulation of studies that show positive benefits is persuasive.

Careers Wales

Careers Wales has a well-established and well-regarded role in supporting activities between schools and employers and is well-placed to continue to broker future such links and encourage more schools, employers and other providers to engage but this raises issues of their capacity to do so.

In 2019, independent research into education business activity in Wales, commissioned by Careers Wales, found that mock interviews and work experience placements are of the most value to schools. However, the loss of the Careers Wales work experience database, which included employers that had been health and safety 'vetted', resulted in schools reporting a lack of time and expertise to carry out their own 'vetting' of potential placements (Beaufort Research).

During the summer term 2022, Careers Wales placed 100 key stage 4 learners into tailored work experience (TWE) placements as part of Welsh Government's 'Renew & Reform' Covid-19 education recovery plan. This pilot project has now been extended and Careers Wales has been commissioned to place 500 learners in TWE during 2022/23. TWE typically

involves a learner spending between 1-3 days with an employer over an extended period of time. Careers Wales has also submitted costs for TWE to local authority lead bodies for consideration as part of Shared Prosperity Fund regional investment plans.

Careers Wales has also worked in partnership with Neath Port Talbot Youth Service, as part of the UK Government Community Renewal Fund, to deliver a work experience project aimed at placing up to 200 year 10 learners into a 1-week block work experience.

Regional Skills Partnerships

Regional Skills Partnerships have a key role in analysing the economic challenges and opportunities in their areas and to identify the skills needed in the workforce.

The Cardiff Regional Skills Partnership is involved in The Cardiff Commitment which has five programmes of activity to support children and young people in Cardiff schools and help to deliver careers and work-related experiences. Cardiff Regional Skills Partnership recognises that a main priority is to improve the overall co-ordination of the system with partners such as Careers Wales, although they recognised this would require a 'massive investment'. At the school level, they would like to see:

- Staff with dedicated time to manage education-business links rather than trying to fit it in around too many other responsibilities.
- Better understanding in schools of the different sectors of the economy and employers' needs.
- More flexibility in schools' approach to work experience, e.g. not just targeting large employers or organising block placements in a small window in the summer term.
- More effort to realise the potential of hybrid or blended placements which combined face-to-face and virtual approaches.
- Clearer differentiation in the objectives of different types of work experience placements and explaining this to participants, e.g. a pre-16 placement that is not linked to their preferred pathway and then another post-16 that was so that learners would be sure they were following the right course.
- Greater attention paid to preparing learners for their participation in work-related activities, e.g. careers fairs did not work well when learners were ill-prepared.
- Improved matching of learners to activities, e.g. business talks about skills required and talent pipelines worked well with older learners who were motivated.
- Better recognition of apprenticeship pathways.
- Schools starting earlier to introduce learners to the different sectors. With the right impetus, the new curriculum for 3-16-year-olds could facilitate this.

Face-to-face, virtual and hybrid delivery

The pandemic saw an acceleration in the application of online/digital technology to deliver work-related experiences that were previously arranged face-to-face. Schools with a commitment to work-related experiences have expressed a desire to get back to arranging face-to-face experiences; but there is considerable potential to complement this traditional type of provision with hybrid/blended and virtual forms of delivery. Virtual learning platforms are becoming more sophisticated. They reduce the need for participants to travel (which benefits the environment and takes up less time) and they permit more flexible scheduling. Online approaches help to ease the problems associated with having too few employers in rural areas and too many schools chasing placements in urban areas at the same time of year. They also enable access to a wider range of businesses – from sole traders and SMEs

to large companies. Ongoing challenges will include better assessment of learners' needs and ensuring fair access to opportunities.

During the Covid pandemic, Speakers for Schools (S4S) established a strategic partnership with Careers Wales focusing on digital placements. Businesses across Wales can engage with learners on a UK-wide basis through S4S. They also run a 'Work Experience for All' campaign to promote high-quality work experience for every young person regardless of their starting point in life or geographical location. The social mobility charity wants to ensure that every young person has at least one work experience placement before the age of 16 and at least one work experience placement between the ages of 16-18.

Labour market and economic challenges and opportunities

References to a VUCA world (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) highlight the difficulties young people face in making sense of labour market opportunities. Some projections predict that two-thirds of jobs that young people will enter have not been identified yet. The climate and environment emergency (CEE), Brexit, Covid, the energy crisis and the war in the Ukraine are major domestic political issues giving rise to labour market and economic challenges. Global trade (especially growing protectionism) and technological development (especially developments such as AI) are transforming labour market opportunities. Progress towards sustainable ways of living and working, as envisaged by the UN 2030 Development goals, is uneven and behind schedule (Robertson, 2021). These issues have particular relevance when planning work-related experiences for children and young people. For example, surveys are reporting more climate or eco-anxiety among young people which can affect their ability to plan for the future (Hickman *et al.*, 2021; Climate Psychology Alliance, 2022). Developments in AI and machine learning are taking away the need for low-level clerical and administrative types of employment (ironically, once the mainstay of work experience programmes) and are even affecting higher skill jobs such as coding.

Overcoming barriers related to equality, diversity and inclusion issues.

The government's child poverty strategy aims to tackle the problem of the estimated 31% of children and young people living in relative poverty (Welsh Government, 2022). It is important that learners from poorer socio-economic backgrounds, looked after children and young carers are not disadvantaged in access to work-related experiences. Similarly, improving opportunities for pupils with special educational needs, in PRUs and Education Other Than at School (EOTAs), and/or from minority groups cannot be ad-hoc or left to chance. Planned assessment of need linked to positive action will improve fairness in access to work-related experiences. High engagement activities such as work experience are associated with providing proxy social and cultural capital (Mann *et al.*, 2018) and transition opportunities (CIOS Careers Hub) for learners with difficulties and disabilities.

4 Work-related experiences: Insights from research

The analysis of research and grey literature focused on the part that work-related experiences plays in:

- Wider education-business partnerships (see Table Two).
- The range of work-related experiences in the curriculum (see Table Three).
- The objectives for work-related experiences (see Table Four); and
- The outcomes of work-related experiences.

This analysis has practical applications in the development of new curriculum planning and recording tools for schools to use. It further highlights the positive benefits of work-related experiences. The evidence base in support of this assertion is growing with most studies assessed as moderate to good. Work or work placement experience is the most widely studied activity but recent reports from Arad Research, The Careers & Enterprise Company and OECD have illuminated effective provision across the full range of work-related experiences. Work-related experiences have most impact when:

- Activities are embedded in the curriculum and co-curriculum.
- Activities are planned to provide a balanced, coherent and progressive programme of work-related experiences.
- Pupils are well-prepared beforehand and debriefed afterwards.
- Good communication is maintained between schools and businesses.
- Outcomes are evaluated.

4.1 Employers’ role in education-business activities

Further developing work-related experiences for children and young people needs to be set in the context of the full range of education-business activities (see Table Two for the employers’ role in education-business activities). Understanding education-business activities as an ecological system helps illuminate the connections, interactions and exchanges that enable best practice in work-related experiences to develop. The schools interviewed frequently mentioned the value of business involvement in the school and the wider community; but slight concern was expressed about selectivity by businesses in the schools that they support. It is important to note that some education-business activities deliver important benefits to education and business that are not just related to CWRE such as sponsorship and wider curriculum support.

Table Two: Employers’ role in education-business activities (after Percy & Kashefpakdel, 2021)

System level	Role of employers	Examples
National and regional	Shape education policy/legislation Articulate what business needs from the education system Contribute to the development of training	Participate in policy making and strategic planning (either directly or via employer bodies): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in decision-making • Make representation • Respond to consultations • Provide labour market and economic intelligence

System level	Role of employers	Examples
	pathways and technical and vocational qualifications	Deliver apprenticeships
Local	Social responsibility ('licence to operate'): Contribute to thriving local economy and community	Provide funding and sponsorship for events and activities Participate in 'open doors' events for students and their families
School	Participate in school governance	Serve as governors Contribute business expertise Enter into partnerships with schools
School	Support curriculum development	Deliver CWRE-related curriculum and co-curriculum activities in partnership with schools, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work experience programmes. • Work shadowing. • Team enterprise challenges, business games and projects. • STEM, IT and business clubs. • Workplace visits. • Job-hunting workshops. • Employability and 'key' skills workshops. • Work taster events. • Case studies. Deliver non-CWRE-related curriculum activities in partnership with schools, e.g. hearing readers, tutoring in maths.
School	Provide professional learning opportunities to school leaders and other staff	Open places on employee training events for school staff. Teacher placements.
Individual	Inform and develop individuals	Assess performance of students on coursework and participation in activities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work experience. • Mentoring. • Job coaching. • Participation in school careers evenings, careers fairs. • Put on open days.
Individual	Create opportunities for individuals	Internships. Part-time and holiday jobs.

4.2 The range of work-related experiences

Work-related experiences can be grouped under four headings (after Ball, 1984; Edwards & Barnes, 1997) (see Table Three):

- Curriculum resources and materials
- Working with business partners
- Role plays, business games and simulations
- Workplace learning.

This categorisation can be used to:

- Show a hierarchy of work-related experiences from indirect student learning experiences (based mainly on cognitive learning) to direct/first-hand experiences (based mainly on experiential learning). It shows the shift in intensity for learners: at one end of the spectrum they are performing learner roles and tasks in school, at the other end they are performing worker roles and tasks in the workplace. This spectrum also provides an insight into the increase in engagement, i.e. the increased demand on both businesses and schools.
- Package the work-related experiences offer to schools.
- Create a handbook or guide to work-related experiences.

Worthwhile learning experiences under all four headings can benefit learners of all ages although the minimum age to do work placement experience (part of workplace learning) is 14.

Table Three: The range of work-related experiences

4.2.1 Curricular and co-curricular resources and activities

Work-related information

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
Work-related information can be inserted into the curriculum resources used to teach units and courses across all areas of learning and experience. It can be provided in a variety of formats (e.g. text, PowerPoints, videos)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils understand the real life applications of the methods, processes and concepts they are learning about. • Work-related learning is integrated in the pupils' overall learning rather than as a bolt-on. • The learning can be enhanced by inputs from employers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow response from authors and commercial publishers to the need for this kind of work-related information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hwb and Careers Wales resources, e.g. Careers City (primary)

Active learning materials and activities

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
<p>Active learning involves actively engaging pupils in their own learning through discussions, problem solving, making, testing and other methods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active learning approaches promotes greater autonomy and responsibility on pupils for their own learning • It also facilitates the development of higher learning and transferable learning skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities can be more time-consuming to arrange and be more resource intensive • Active learning approaches do not remove the need for structured support from the facilitator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lunchtime KS3 Business Club that is an introduction to Business Studies at KS4 • THALES Clubs (cybersecurity) for KS3 and KS4 • Creative learning through the Arts facilitated the production of a resource showing pupils how to record audio and video using mobile devices https://hwb.gov.wales/repository/resource/f651735b-4886-4ae0-a705-7fb1ef6b9385 • WWF Cymru has a Sustainable Futures Programme aimed at 14–18-year-olds which focuses on developing 10 sustainability skills with free training for staff delivering the course. Business volunteers enrich the programme

Online resources

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
Online work-related learning resources are a cost-effective way for producers (e.g. employers, Careers Wales) to potentially reach more schools and pupils than would be possible through face to face encounters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils can acquire digital skills when accessing these resources • Pupils can often access resources by themselves at any time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online resources are a selective service so not all schools or pupils will choose to access them • Not all online resources are free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-recorded employer and alumni videos

Case studies

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
A case study is an example of a particular instance of work-related learning. They can be created in a variety of formats (e.g. text-based, audio-visual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils can sometimes engage with and identify with a practical example more effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies can be time-consuming to create • They can become out-of-date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hwb and Careers Wales resources

4.2.2 Working with business partners

Employer involvement in curriculum / role models

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
Employers can be called on to help with specific curriculum planning or school projects. Senior Managers from industry acting as mentors to Headteachers and the Senior Management Team in a school can add value to, and enhance, the development of appropriate management strategies for coping with major institutional change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This provides opportunities for employers and schools to co-create resources for CWRE across all year groups. Some qualifications rely on employer involvement, e.g. BTECs, ASDAN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protocols need to be established, e.g. for safeguarding and risk assessment 'Contracts' or formal arrangements need to be agreed to ensure meaningful encounters for pupils Need to brief employers so that the work can be 'pitched' correctly Tracking and data recording of work-related experiences can be time-consuming for schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community governors Y8 & 9 pupils working towards their Bronze Industrial Cadet Award complete a STEM project over 20 hours with their own STEM role model who provides guidance

Employer talk

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
Many Sector Skills Councils are encouraging individuals to take on the role of an Ambassador for that industry sector and commit some voluntary time to promote career opportunities and pathways by providing information, advice and guidance to young people considering the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ambassadors could be apprentices who can bring the pathway/route to life Talks could be used in a variety of ways and with all age groups, e.g. assemblies, lessons, parents evenings, careers fairs, lunchtimes 'pop-ups' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When to book events and for which year groups Who needs to be involved, including staff cover, admin support. Where will the talks take place and 'meet & greet' arrangements Equipment required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Industry Days' Presentations by The Army

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
future career options. Generally, Industrial Ambassadors are asked to give a minimum of one day per year to this activity – but it could always be more if the individual wishes			

Employer mentoring and e-mentoring

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
Employers providing one-to-one encouragement and support to pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise pupils' aspirations and increase motivation. • Support studies and develop 'skills profile'. • Benefits pupils who choose to opt-in to the mentoring programme. Schools can target pupils who they think will benefit from having a mentor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to agree length of mentoring programme. • Protocols to be established in line with school policies, e.g. safeguarding and risk assessment checks. 	

Job coaching

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
A job coach is a professional who helps people prepare for employment. These professionals often work for private companies as well as for schools. Self-employment is also an option for job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The different types of job coaching can include: • Career path counselling for Y10 and 11 pupils • Career coaching for those 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job coaches have limited time to give to schools on a voluntary basis because of their paid work 	

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
coaches. Many choose to work with veterans, those with disabilities or those who face other challenges related to employment.	entering the workforce		

Mock interviews

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
Schools may look to employers to provide opportunities for students to practise completing formal job applications, followed by a mock interview. The employers provide real personnel and job descriptions for the purpose, and such interviews can be both preceded and followed with advice likely to sharpen the interview techniques of pupils when applying for jobs. Some schools include such practice in setting work experience placements as well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the development of employability skills – how to prepare for their next steps. • Improves communication skills by completing an application and talking with an adult they have not met before. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of materials, and support for the activity. • Booking an area(s) to host activity, work with site manager to ensure parking and equipment is in place. • Resources for tutors and interview contributors. • Create a base for interviewers that will be used for pre- event and refreshments and feedback at the end of the day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mock interviews for Y11s to prepare them for college, apprenticeship and part-time job interviews. • Mock interviews for Y12s to prepare them for HE interviews.

Alumni activity

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
former pupils of a school, college, or university who have either attended or graduated in some	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the links between studies at school and the world of work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to make contact with past pupils. • Promoting and growing the Alumni network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers Wales Alumni project - CW are helping secondary schools across Wales to build

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
fashion from the institution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real life experiences and achievements shared raise aspirations and motivate learners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage current leavers to join. 	their communities of past pupils.

Careers Fairs and Virtual Careers Fairs

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
A job fair, also commonly referred to as a job expo or career fair or career expo, is an event in which employers, recruiters, and schools give information to potential employees. Job seekers attend job fairs to speak face-to-face with potential employers and ask questions about the various positions available. In addition to in-person events, online job fairs give job seekers a virtual way to get in contact with possible employers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large gathering of local employers, FE/ITP, regional universities and national employers in one place at one time. • Can be themed/focused. • Several year groups, staff and parents/carers can attend. • Co-creation of resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time to hold the careers fair; does it support transition points? • Admin time required for contacting, communicating, hosting arrangements on the day whether on school site or held elsewhere. • Preparation of pupils to gain the most from the experience. • De-briefing to maximise experiential engagement. • Parental engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A college hosted a careers fair for local schools. • ACCA held its first early careers virtual exhibition for 13-18-year-olds in March 2023.

Workshops

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
Employers leading discussions with pupils on school, college or employer premises about the realities of work, and the employment and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This could be part of a careers fair or perhaps a lunchtime pop-up or discrete careers lesson. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to make the most of the time - survey students to choose which workshop(s) they would find 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers Discovery Week for Y7-11 included virtual presentations and resources from a range of

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
training environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailored by sectors (LMI) and linked to curriculum. 	<p>interesting and allocate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students prepare questions in advance. Determine length of time and where to host them 	<p>providers linked to areas of learning and experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Y9 computer science workshop facilitated by CGI (IT and business consulting services firm) included pupils building a balloon-powered car.

Speed networking / Careers carousel

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
Schools invite speakers from the workplace to come and give information and advice about their jobs, and suggest career paths for those pupils interested in their respective sectors or work roles. Such speakers can outline the essential employment skills required, and discuss the matching of the school curriculum with career needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisations such as Speakers for Schools, Inspiring the Future work with volunteers and 'place' them with schools. Event can be used to challenge stereotypes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain regular contact with the volunteers. Pupils prepare questions in advance. Determine length of time and where to host them. Book time with site manager to confirm parking, equipment, layout. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careers Wales world of work carousel days at KS3 & 4, e.g. a drop-down careers day with five employers delivering presentations and answering pupils' questions.

4.2.3 Role plays, business games and simulations

Business games and enterprise competition

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
Employers setting business briefs for pupils to tackle. This type of activity encourages team working, leadership, good communication, working to deadlines, problem solving and requires an understanding of business finance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the employability and transferrable skills that employers are looking for. • Themes support cross-curricular working. • Staff gain implicit CPD. • Professional Learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow time for planning, delivery and de-brief. • Maintain regular contact with person(s) from business. • Ensure business understands how the activity supports the curriculum and any learning outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALN pupils run a café and charity shop in school. They men bicycles, grow plants, make jewellery and print mugs and T-shirts for sale. • The Enterprise Challenge is part of the Welsh Bacc. • Young Dragons (https://www.young-dragons.co.uk/) is the annual Primary Enterprise Challenge sponsored by Welsh Government and Swansea Council. • Design a Children's Centre Competition for primary age children.

4.2.4 Workplace learning

Workplace visits – virtual and face to face

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
Visits to places of work beyond the school include site tours which extend the pupils' understanding of the many kinds of jobs available in a business organisation. The company hosts the visit and provides employees to act as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the links for curriculum and the world of work. • Learn about how and why businesses operate. • Learn from contact with people who work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some pre-planning with teachers is essential in terms of what pupils should look for on the visit . • A debrief session with the pupils should take place at the end of the visit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Museum Wales virtual visits for schools are free live interactive workshops designed for learners aged 7-11 https://museum.wales/learning/virtual-visits/.

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
guides for small groups of pupils giving them an overview of how the company operates.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual French and Spanish department trips include workplace visits. • Y11s visited a building site to learn about all stages of construction from seeing the groundworks to handing the house over to homeowners.

Job shadowing

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
Pupils and/or teachers may be involved in such 'shadowing'. It is another way of establishing the relevant links between the academic curriculum and workplace needs and practice. The pupil and/or teacher follow one person through an agreed working time period (typically a few hours) observing the demands and skills they have to use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shadowing cannot just educate teachers as to actual workplace practice, but possibly lead to specific job offers for young people. • Provides an opportunity to explore/research an interest in a particular sector. • Relatively short in actual experience and can take place several times across the academic year or key stage. • May provide access to workplaces that do not offer work placements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils will not take on a work task – they are observing working practice. • The experience should afford them time to gather information and develop their communication skills. • Duration of work shadow experience to be agreed with employers. • Job shadow 'diary' agreed between school and employers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pupil shadowed the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Part-time work

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
The youngest age a child can work part-time is 13, except children involved in areas such as television, theatre and modelling (Check local authority regulations).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people develop knowledge of the world of work at an early age, identifying roles and responsibilities. • They develop fundamental employability skills such: time management, team working, communication, problem solving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of school/work balance on academic studies. • The legal number of hours and on which days the work is done. • There is no minimum wage under 16. 	

Work-related volunteering

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
Volunteering is a voluntary act of an individual or group freely giving time and labour for community service. Helping others and contributing to one's community through positive, impactful action makes people feel good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteering allows pupils to practice and develop an array of social relationships and other soft skills beneficial to career ambitions. • Improve mental health and well-being. • Practise social good. • Build community and expand networks. • Gain real world career preparation and experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of volunteering. • Organisations that support volunteering. • Reasons for volunteering. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heddllu Bach - delivered jointly by schools and Gwent Police – is a volunteering opportunity for 9-11-year-olds. • Y9 pupils do gardening activities at a local big house open to the public and create an adventure trail. • Y10 pupils do environmental maintenance activities at a local estate as part of their Baccalaureate Community Challenge assessment.

Work experience (domestic and European/international)

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
<p>Work experience (less than 1 week). Work experience (1–2-week block). Work experience (regular/weekly commitment).</p> <p>Work experience in school/college Often conducted over a period of two weeks, although some are sustained on a longer part-time basis. Such placements develop pupils' personal and social skills as well as giving them a taste of working life and responsibility. Many pupils 'blossom' in such an environment, and find new reserves of initiative and maturity. They clearly develop a sense of the demands of the workplace and working life, and some may indeed continue in such jobs when they leave school. Often such jobs will link them to further educational and vocational qualifications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offered following a number of work- related activities in particular job shadowing. • It engages them in thinking about their future. • They gain opportunities to learn about LMI and how useful it is to them. • They can access social support to help them make informed decisions about their future career. • Projects can be used to link curriculum to the world of work. • Maturity of the pupils. • Can help to motivate pupils at risk of disengaging from school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding enough high quality placements for the whole of a year group. • Preparing pupils well beforehand and organising follow-up activities, especially for reflection. • Briefing and de-briefing employers. • Timing placements in the academic year. Competition between local schools for the same time of the year. • Carrying out health & safety checks and risk assessments. • Running costs, e.g. employing an administrator, paying for the vetting of placements if using an external agency. • Ensuring fair access in the allocation of placements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The schools in one council area are offering all year 10 learners a 1-week block work experience and all year 12 a 2-week block. • The Tailored Work Experience Placements managed by Careers Wales in five local authorities (part of the Welsh Government's 'renew and reform' project). • The Jon Egging Trust in conjunction with RAF Valley runs three Blue Skies programmes (Level 1 – teamwork, Level 2 – Leadership, Level 3 – Work Experience) with 10-15 pupils on each level.

Work experience (Virtual)

Definition	Benefits	Challenges	Examples of practice in Welsh schools
Such 'visits' are conducted through company websites where pupils may tour a workplace seeing the respective site and identifying all the specialist roles within it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cost-effective way of introducing pupils to the world of work. • Build a 'bank' of visits. • Can be conducted in or out of school hours, linked to business hours. • Businesses do not have to leave their place of work, a more efficient use of their time. • Small groups access the experience and share the learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils in particular those with SEND/ Autism may not gain as much from the experience. • IT systems are sufficient for numbers of pupils. • If accessing in pupils' own time how is the experience tracked? • Time committed to the preparation, delivery and de-brief for all stakeholders should be as detailed as for actual work experience or an actual work visit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speakers for Schools.

4.3 Objectives for work-related experiences

This report identifies six main objectives of work-related experiences relevant to Welsh schools (See Table Four). Objectives can be used by schools for:

- Needs analysis – identifying priorities but also gaps in the school's provision.
- Defining pupils' entitlement and intended outcomes.
- Planning learning and assessment.
- Curriculum planning and development.
- Monitoring, review and evaluation.

Table Four: Objectives for work-related experiences

Work-related experience objectives (after QCA, 2008). All learners:	Suggested types of activities and experiences	Intended learning outcomes – Enabling learners to:
1. relate their curriculum learning to careers and work.	3-11 years Topics (AoLE-based) Visits Visitors 11-16 years Projects and enquiries (AoLE-based)	Strengthen their motivation to learn through life. Explain the relevance of their school learning to careers and work. Raise achievement.

Work-related experience objectives (after QCA, 2008). All learners:	Suggested types of activities and experiences	Intended learning outcomes – Enabling learners to:
	Visits Visitors	
2. continuously develop their understanding of careers and work.	3-11 years Conversations and dialogue Topics and themes Visits Visitors 11-16 years Conversations and dialogue, e.g. in tutor time Projects and enquiries Visits Visitors Work observation Job shadowing	Find and interpret LMI. Contribute to the development of thriving local communities and a healthy society and economy. Develop their own values in relation to big issues such as social justice and sustainable living and working.
3. acquire and develop life and work skills.	3-7 years Role plays 7-16 years Simulations and games Workshops and master classes Volunteering.	Develop core skills of literacy and numeracy. Recognise and develop employability and enterprise skills. Develop DCF (Digital Competence Framework) skills.
4. participate in work-related activities, projects and challenges.	3-16 years Simulations and games Mini and school enterprises Simulations and games Mini and school enterprises Business challenges and competitions School clubs.	Show leadership skills. Work in a team. Develop problem-solving skills. Recognise and demonstrate enterprise skills. Promote understanding of business organisations and cultures.
5. experience work-related roles and the tasks associated with them.	3-7 years Role plays 7-11 years Role-related experiences 11-16 years Role-related experiences Work experience	Work in a team Maintain health and safety practices. Demonstrate employability skills (e.g. punctuality, reliability, communication).
6. develop the personal resources they need to prepare for their future careers.	3-7 years Portfolio building 7-11 years Portfolio building Peer mentoring 11-16 years Portfolio building Peer and business mentoring	Acquire socialisation skills. Reflect on their learning. Raise aspirations/aspirational capability. Build resilience. Challenge stereotyping Develop independent learning skills. Develop career management skills, e.g.

Work-related experience objectives (after QCA, 2008). All learners:	Suggested types of activities and experiences	Intended learning outcomes – Enabling learners to:
		planning, deciding, making transitions, networking.

The potential benefit of this approach is that it can underpin an entitlement or guarantee for all learners. ‘Entitlements’ can be expressed in different ways:

- An entitlement to different types of activities, e.g. one meaningful employer encounter per year and one work experience placement pre-16 and another post 16. (Meaningful is a term not always clearly defined. The Gatsby Foundation (2014) defines ‘meaningful’ as being about learners having the opportunity to explore the meaning of their encounters with employers and learn from them).
- An entitlement to achieving specified learning outcomes, e.g. developing customer care skills and developing CV and job application skills.
- An entitlement to so many hours of curriculum time or so many guided learning hours, e.g. 6 hours per year at age 3 and 50 hours per year at age 16.

An approach that combines these methods is to provide schools with a curriculum planning and recording tool (See Table Five).

Table Five: Work-related experiences curriculum planning and recording spreadsheet

Activity	Year/ group	Staff initials:	Type				Objectives / coverage						Date(s)	Hour s		
			1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6				
Design a Children's Centre Competition	Y5	JL			✓		✓			3		✓	✓		24.03.23	2
Key																
Type of work-related experience			Objectives for work-related learning experiences. All learners:													
1. Resources and materials.			1. Relate their curriculum learning to careers and work.													
2. Working with business partners.			2. Continuously develop their understanding of careers and work.													
3. Role plays, business games and simulations.			3. Acquire and develop life and work skills.													
4. Workplace learning.			4. Participate in work-related activities, projects and challenges.													
			5. Experience work-related roles and the tasks associated with them.													
			6. Develop the personal resources they need to prepare for their future careers.													
Hours Include preparation, delivery and feedback time.																

This partially worked example of a planning and recording spreadsheet can be used in a variety of ways:

- It enables schools to plan and monitor a coherent, balanced and progressive programme of work-related experiences for all learners that is embedded in the whole curriculum.
- It can be shared with all staff so that they are able to enter their own data.
- The description of the activity can be turned into a hyperlink that links to more detail about the activity and resources used.
- Extra fields can be added as required, e.g. to record the businesses involved in the activity.

4.4 Outcomes of work-related experiences

Policy support for investment in work-related experiences has long been constrained by the lack of rigorous longitudinal studies to uncover impact and gaps in the research evidence that exists (OECD, 2021). In England, support for work-related experiences in the curriculum has also been affected by contradictory policy making (Edge, 2018).

Previous research has focused mainly on the efficacy of work experience, but the strength of the evidence base is generally assessed at level 2 on the Early Intervention Foundation Evidence Scale (Buzzeo & Cifci, 2017; EIF, 2023). More research is needed into the impact of other work-related experiences such as job shadowing and workplace visits and, especially relevant to the Welsh curriculum, the impact of work-related experiences for 3-11-year-olds.

The lack of 'hard' evidence from quantitative studies should not be interpreted as a reason not to support education-business partnership activities. Large scale research is costly and often raises ethical issues (randomised control trials, for example, that depend on depriving a cohort of the benefits of the intervention that is under study). The evidence base for the effectiveness of work-related experiences is diffuse targeting different kinds of interventions for different groups of learners in different settings and to test different hypotheses about desirable outcomes. A full evidence review is beyond the scope of this report. Nevertheless, the accumulated evidence of well-conducted studies in the UK and internationally suggests many positive benefits, and potential benefits, and just as importantly, no negative effects (SQW, 2022).

Outcomes for learners

The research literature (Buzzeo & Cifci, 2017; Robertson, 2021) suggests that six types of outcomes can be achieved by learners from participating in work-related experiences:

- **User satisfaction** – learners report that they found the experience enjoyable and/or useful.
- **Learning outcomes** – learners cultivate improved knowledge and understanding (e.g. insights into work, how to evaluate a job), skills (e.g. employability and career management skills) and attitudes (e.g. motivation, commitment to lifelong learning).
- **Psychological/behavioural outcomes** – learners boost their personal autonomy, wellbeing and effectiveness (e.g. they make gains in transition confidence, aspirational capability, self-efficacy, adaptability, hope, resilience, happiness, optimism. These gains may have a bearing on their ability in later life to choose a preferred lifestyle and work-life balance).
- **Educational outcomes** – e.g. gain food hygiene, first aid, health and safety and life and work skills qualifications. learners achieve better exam results and qualifications than previously expected after participating in work-related experiences. They progress into further and higher education.
- **Economic outcomes** – learners are more effective in applying for personally-satisfying courses and jobs. They are more likely to be employed. One ground-breaking study in the UK found an association between contact with employers in secondary education and an uplift in wages (Mann & Percy, 2013).
- **Social outcomes** – learners develop interpersonal skills. They are better able to communicate and co-operate with others. By contributing to the wellbeing of others, they are better able to help communities to thrive.

Recently, several new frameworks have been developed that identify CWRE-related learning areas or purposes under which intended learning outcomes can be grouped. Appendix A provides two examples of such frameworks with a commentary on their applicability to the Welsh context.

For this report, one school surveyed its Year 10 pupils about their perception of the benefits of the work experience placements. 115 out of 130 pupils participated in work experience and 57 answered the two questions which were based on the Young Person's Guarantee survey. (see Table Six below). The psychological/behavioural and educational outcomes registered strongly in their responses to question one. Question two revealed low user dissatisfaction other than they would have liked to have been given more responsibility and for the placement to have lasted longer.

Table Six: Perceptions of the benefits of work experience by Year 10 pupils (n = 57)

Q1. Which of the following statements regarding your recent work experience apply to you? Select all that apply	
It gave me more confidence to apply for a job in future	64.9%
It helped me develop skills that I can put on my CV	70.1%
It helped me understand what skills or qualifications are needed for the job	50.8%
It helped me decide the type of job that I want to do in future	45.6%
It gave me the experience I needed to apply for the job I want	45.6%
Q2. What could have made your work experience better? Select all that apply	
Being in a sector I'm interested in	31.5%
A better explanation of my responsibilities from the beginning	35.0%
The work experience lasting longer	45.6%
To be given more responsibility so I could learn more skills	43.8%
Having more support during the work placement	21.0%

The Edge Foundation

Employability skills are the skills needed to get and keep a job. Different organisations have developed employability skills frameworks for specific purposes (e.g. sector-specific employability skills) and these frameworks often overlap with other skills sets (e.g. career management skills, soft skills, basic skills). The Edge Foundation (Kashepakdel et al., 2018; Emms et al., 2023) approached this issue by identifying the employability skills and competencies most commonly cited by employers as relevant to their needs. They also emphasised the importance of learners acquiring metacognitive strategies to be able to transfer and apply their employability skills and competencies in new situations. The updated research also reports on students' perceptions of the employability skills that they were developing most and least in school. Table Seven maps the Edge Foundation Framework against the Four Purposes:

Table Seven: Mapping the Edge Foundation Framework against the Four Purposes

Employability skills and competencies	The Four purposes Young people who:
Problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are questioning and enjoy solving problems
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> can communicate effectively in different forms and settings, using both Welsh and English
Self-management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> have the skills and knowledge to manage everyday life as independently as they can

Employability skills and competencies	The Four purposes Young people who:
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lead and play different roles in teams effectively and responsibly
Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connect and apply their knowledge and skills to create ideas and products • think creatively to reframe and solve problems
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can use number effectively in different contexts
Digital skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use digital technologies creatively to communicate, find and analyse information
Informed (about the world of work)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are building up a body of knowledge and have the skills to connect and apply that knowledge in different contexts • engage with contemporary issues based upon their knowledge and values
Confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are building their mental and emotional well-being by developing confidence, resilience and empathy • have the confidence to participate in performance
Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set themselves high standards and seek and enjoy challenge • give of their energy and skills so that other people will benefit
Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are building their mental and emotional well-being by developing confidence, resilience and empathy
Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can explain the ideas and concepts they are learning about • undertake research and evaluate critically what they find

This mapping exercise shows that employability skills are already embedded in the four purposes without the need for another framework. The challenge facing schools is how to:

- Make explicit to learners which employability skills they are developing in specific learning activities.
- Facilitate learning of these skills in a way that makes them transferable.
- Assess performance in these skills.
- Plan a spiral curriculum that supports broad and balanced skills development.

Arad Research

Arad Research (2021) identified several challenges in delivering work experience, including teachers' workload, and the availability and difficulties of placements by sector, employer size, location, the cost of travel and the availability of public transport. They also noted that learners with lower socio-economic status were less likely to have access to work experience in 'high status' workplaces. The report recommend key actions that are needed. They are reproduced below as bullet points with a commentary based on the desk research and interviews conducted for this report:

- *Match pupils with appropriately stretching opportunities*

This is a wider aim than matching pupils with opportunities linked to their career interests which is not always possible. In any event, it is important to explain to pupils what they can achieve on their placement to lower the mismatch of expectations.

- *Outline the benefits of hosting young people for work experience*

The potential benefits for employers have been identified by Smithers and Marsden (Smithers and Marsden, n.d.).

- *Support opportunities for work experience throughout the academic year*

Schools that are part of a cluster or network can negotiate between them the dates of their work experience schemes to avoid overloading employers; but the pressure of preparing pupils for exams reduces the flexibility that schools are willing to offer.

- *Increase post-16 students' access to work experience*

The Young Person's Guarantee Phase 2 Report (Welsh Government, 2023 March) found that 16–18-year-olds were more likely to find their experience useful than 19–24-year-olds. Targeted work experience is more effective when it is in a sector that is related to the courses students are doing. The report also stresses that it is too early for students to focus on one path so there is value in ensuring learners can try multiple different types of work experience.

- *Help pupils prepare for and debrief after work experience*

Buzzeo and Cifci (2017) examined the evidence about the effectiveness of work experience delivery and concluded that pupils need to be properly prepared and debriefed in order to get the most out of their placements. To this can be added the importance of visits by staff to pupils on-work experience to hold a structured conversation with them about what they are learning from their placements.

- *Support repeated interactions with employers*

A recent report (OECD, 2021b) supported the idea of successive placements and included a case study of Finland where pupils have two placements pre-16. A possible model for Wales is for pupils to have a pre-16 placement, to help pupils make decisions about their post-16 courses and places of study, and a post-16 placement to tie in with their current courses and career interests. This is a very different scenario to the model in the OECD report which has been developed in New Zealand. It postpones work experience to post 16 (see Table Eight). The model has a superficially attractive linear logic, but it does not accurately reflect the way that children and young people develop their career interests.

Table Eight: A model for workplace engagement c10-18 (David Turner)

Work exposure	Work exploration	Work experience
Activities that present ideas, information and concepts about the world of work and career development. Largely aimed at young people aged 10 to 14. Typical activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussions of parental occupations • career talks from people in work about the jobs they do and the value they find in them • discussions of the gendered character of work • workplace visits 	Activities in which young people actively explore and investigate the world of work. Largely aimed at young people aged 13 to 16. Typical activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career talks from people in work about the jobs they do and how to access them. • Student research into specific occupations, access to them and their likely future characteristics. • Development of CV writing and interview 	Activities that offer young people close and more sustained opportunities for observation and participation in one or more workplaces. Largely aimed at young people aged 16 to 18. Typical activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and workplace based work placements, undertaking supervised work for one week. • Work shadowing focused around specific research questions.

Work exposure	Work exploration	Work experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of workplace examples within related curricula. 	<p>skills with employee volunteers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job shadowing. Discussions (career conversations) with people in work about the future development of occupations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> student enterprises supported by employee volunteer coaches student work-related projects addressing local community challenges with volunteer coaches employer forum organised by students to bring together students and employers to discuss expectations and opportunities

- *Support host employers and businesses*

National guidelines will help employers and businesses to understand the objectives of work experience, to know what to expect and to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. Schools can complement this support by providing information about their schemes to local employers and involving them directly in some of the preparation and follow-up activities. Good communication with employers and businesses is essential.

- *Support work experience opportunities within school and with suppliers*

This is a very effective way of providing work experience for pupils who need extra support such as pupils with special educational needs and disabilities; but work experience within school and with suppliers is potentially beneficial to any pupils.

- *Monitor and evaluate the quality of work experience*

Schools can use a range of evaluation techniques that are manageable and yield sufficiently robust evidence to measure impact and inform planning and decision-making about future improvements to their work experience scheme. Surveys and questionnaires can provide quantitative data but focus groups and scrutiny of pupils' work experience diaries can also be illuminating. The lack of monitoring and evaluation can lead to problems and poorer outcomes.

- *Identify and address inequalities in access to work experience. (Millard et al. 2019)*

Schools should have a work experience policy that expressly states the principle of fair access to work experience opportunities. The OECD found that "access to workplaces through work placements/internships are commonly linked to the social background of students, particularly where they are tasked by their schools with sourcing a placement with the help of their family. In such circumstances, patterns of social reproduction can be expected as students gain substantive experience of professions where their parents are better connected." (OECD, 2022, p.9).

OECD

OECD has recently published three reports of interest in its policy perspectives series. While they provide valuable evidence of the positive economic benefits of work-related experiences, they do not sufficiently focus on other types of outcomes, e.g. psychological/behavioural, learning, educational and social. The three reports are:

1. *Indicators of teenage career readiness: guidance for policy makers.* (OECD, 2021a)

The report identifies 11 indicators of career readiness and offers guidance to policy-makers on how to create the conditions that will foster career readiness. All seven indicators in the exploring and experiencing phases can be boosted through work-related experiences.

Confirmed international indicators of teenage career readiness
<i>Exploring the future</i> Engaging with people in work through career talks or job fairs Workplace visits or job shadowing Application and interview skills development activities Career conversations – including. with teachers Occupationally-focused short programmes
<i>Experiencing the future</i> Part-time working Volunteering
<i>Thinking about the future</i> Career certainty Career ambition Career alignment Instrumental motivation towards school

A conclusion of the career readiness project is that students who leave education with first-hand experience of participating in workplaces can expect smoother transitions into full-time work.

2. *Experiencing the workplace: the importance and benefits for teenagers.* (OECD, 2021b)

The conclusion of this report is that the evidence around the benefits of experiencing the workplace (e.g. through work experience, part-time work and volunteering) is particularly strong. It presents the findings from longitudinal international studies that show a positive impact on employment outcomes such as salary uplift. It also discusses the benefits in terms of boosts to students' human, social and cultural capital. It recommends that to maximise the impact schools must pay attention to the preparation and follow-up of students who have placements.

3. *Job Shadowing: a guide to delivering an effective career development activity* (OECD, 2022)

The report includes examples of best practice in Canada, New Zealand, Malta, Germany and the United States. Its main conclusions are that job shadowing is:

- Best delivered at age 13-16 following extensive career exploration activities and preceding deep engagement activities such as work placements and volunteering
- Schools can maximise the benefits by preparing students well, by designing experiences that are authentic, insightful and productive, and by enabling students to think critically about the experience (both before and afterwards)
- Potential immediate benefits include giving students 'the opportunity to clarify and confirm career plans, gain useful new information about how they can best prepare for

entry to occupations of interest' (p.16) and develop social networks of value to career progression outside their existing networks.

- Some evidence is available that job shadowing has a positive benefit on long-term employment outcomes.

Outcomes for schools

Smithers and Marsden (n.d.) identify five types of benefit. Education-business links:

- Contribute to the motivation and development of staff and students, e.g. development of particular skills, including leadership and management.
- Create opportunity to understand, influence and learn from business, e.g. better understanding of the world of work.
- Help students make informed career choices, e.g. access to more information and direct sources of advice and role models.
- Earn schools goodwill and positive attribution in the media.
- Give access to resources, e.g. financial support for projects and events.

To this must be added an association with school improvement.

Outcomes for businesses

Smithers and Marsden also discuss the benefit to business using similar headings.

Education-business links:

- Contribute to the motivation and development of staff, e.g. job enrichment and non-formal training.
- Create opportunities to understand, influence and learn from education, e.g. better informed contribution to governing bodies.
- Help recruitment in short and long term, e.g. makes a company more attractive.
- Earn goodwill, e.g. enhances a company's reputation/licence to operate.
- Give access to resources, e.g. teacher placements bring expertise and fresh perspectives into the company.

In addition, businesses see the benefit of education-business activities in 'anticipatory socialisation' of young people into work, the encouragement of a positive work ethic and the acquisition of skills that promote job satisfactoriness and career and work readiness.

For businesses, many of the work-related activities they support do not bring direct operational value to their business but are an investment in the future on behalf of all businesses.

5 Conclusions and recommendations

The research for this report has identified five main priority areas that are key to improving the provision for inspiring children and young people's career journeys through experiences of work.

5.1 The infrastructure of support to schools and businesses

Careers Wales is generally highly regarded by schools for its professionalism and consistency of services. It is well-placed through its well-qualified Business Engagement Advisers, Careers Advisers and CWRE Teams to strengthen the infrastructure of support to schools and businesses. Its role as a provider of universal and selective services but also as an enabler and facilitator of bespoke services needs to grow to meet the challenges ahead. The annual partnership agreements with schools are a highly effective mechanism for schools and Careers Wales to agree their respective contributions to a work-related experiences action plan for the year ahead and to review the previous year. Strategic partnerships with businesses and other providers are also a highly effective way of managing work-related experiences. Extending the remit of Careers Wales will require an increase in resources even allowing for a possible remodelling of some of its other services (especially the loss of short-term projects). Even so, steps will need to be taken to mitigate risks such as demand for their services from schools outstripping capacity, innovative services proving financially unsustainable and the stresses associated with the management of change. The list of initiatives in the 2022-23 operational plan is already impressive, but their role could be further developed to include:

- Increasing the support for schools with primary age children to implement CWRE in the Curriculum for Wales.
- Co-ordinating and expanding pre- and post-16 work experience provision. Schools would particularly welcome the restoration of a free vetting service. This could be managed directly by the Business Engagement Advisers Team, but also sub-contracted to approved organisations that already provide a service in some areas. Developing new work experience guidelines for schools and businesses will help them follow legal and insurance requirements but also improve quality and standards.
- Developing more new resources, materials and activities, in partnership with schools and businesses. A curated and up to date online directory of curriculum resources, case studies and new projects, challenges and competitions would be welcomed by schools
- Running new pilot programmes which if successful could be extended nationally, e.g. a digital passport, a digital CWRE badges supported by an e-portfolio pilot scheme, and programmes for more able and talented (MAT) pupils.
- Publishing a second edition of the CWRE toolkit and toolbox with resources and materials to help curriculum managers in schools design, develop and review their provision of work-related experiences. The toolkit could outline the range of work-related experiences and describe the six objectives and four types of work-related experiences. The toolbox could include the curriculum hours planning and recording tool that enables schools to track the provision for each group or cohort.

5.2 Quality and standards

The Welsh Government has issued a CWRE 3-16 toolkit and toolbox for schools and approved the development of a new CWRE Quality Award. Careers Wales also runs an annual Valued Partner Awards scheme including an award for the most supportive work

experience employer. These contribute to improving quality and raising standards; but more could be done. Issuing updated guidance to schools and business on running effective work experience schemes has been mentioned above. Other options include:

- Strengthening the criteria relating to work-related experiences in the CWRE Award under development.
- Developing a work experience quality award.
- Offering training for teaching and administrative staff involved in running work experience schemes.
- Developing the role of business engagement advisers in supporting local clusters and networks of schools to manage work-related experiences in their areas more effectively.
- Asking Estyn to carry out a thematic review of work-related experiences provision in schools.
- Developing a research agenda. Literature reviews have exposed the under-researched aspects of work-related experiences. It would be useful to develop a programme of research to illuminate best and emerging next practice.

5.3 The range of work-related experiences

Work experience is the most well-known activity, but some other types of work-related experiences are less well-evidenced in Welsh schools. Schools should be encouraged to find out about other activities and how they can benefit their pupils. Business mentors or role models, for example, can motivate and engage pupils especially at key stage 4. Younger pupils, but also older ones, can benefit from work observation and job shadowing which can be delivered virtually, face to face or in combination. Business challenges, including those modelled on popular TV formats, can also be very successful.

5.4 Outcomes and impact

A strong focus on meaning and impact helps ensure that the experiences planned are relevant, pedagogically sound and produce worthwhile outcomes.

Assessing the outcomes of pupils' participation in work-related experiences needs to be an integral part of the learning process so that it provides evidence of the effectiveness of the provision and informs what pupils need to learn next.

An approach which may be worth piloting with a group of schools is based on 'e-portfolio learning' and digital badges. A CWRE e-portfolio is both a product and a learning environment which utilises effective learning processes. As a product, it is a collection of evidence which can include details of a learner's plans, targets, experiences and achievements. Pupils enjoy celebrating their experiences but a portfolio is also a data source that learners can use, for example, to present themselves to employers. and achievements. Accredited outcomes such as units and qualifications offered by awarding bodies in life and work skills and the work-related component of the Welsh Baccalaureate could be recorded. Digital badges could also be stored in a pupil's e-portfolio.

As a learning process (Belgrad, Burke & Fogarty, 2008), an (e-)portfolio is based on the principles of collecting, selecting and reflecting. These processes can be enhanced by staff (e.g. tutors) and, where appropriate, business mentors supporting learners. Considerable thought will need to be given to the design, costs and potential wider uses of an (e-)portfolio system for learners. Similar previous initiatives (e.g. Records of Achievement, Progress File, skills passports) have proved difficult to sustain.

An analysis of research into effective assessment by Black *et al.* (2002) found that assessment for learning approaches (e.g. eliciting information, giving appropriate feedback, ensuring learners understand quality and learners carrying out peer and self-assessment) were more effective than assessment of learning for helping learners to improve. Assessment for learning is ideally suited to a portfolio learning environment.

Digital badges could be created by organisations such as Careers Wales, schools and regional skills partnerships themselves which can be awarded using assessment for learning techniques with the added benefit that they can be used to recognise and accredit learners' achievements in work-related experiences (see Appendix B).

5.5 Innovation

Innovation is not always successful. The response to the Speakers for Schools virtual work experience initiative, for example, was disappointing. Much depends on timing, costs and the capacity of schools, businesses and partner agencies to change their practice; but innovation in relation to work-related experiences will help to inspire learners. Ideas for new developments include:

- Primary schools need help with implementing CWRE. It would be helpful to all schools if a pilot group of schools worked with Careers Wales and local businesses to develop and publish a range of classroom teaching resources and materials linked to the areas of learning and experience. There is also an opportunity to encourage commercial publishers to produce CWRE resources and materials geared to the new curriculum.
- Pupils going through the school system now will face the consequences of the climate and environment emergency. One of the responses open to them is to embrace sustainable living and working, but information, resources and activities to help them are hard to find. Collaboration between schools, businesses and Careers Wales to develop 'net zero' games, simulations, projects and challenges can inspire children and young people's career journeys.
- Inspiring young people to broaden their horizons using gamification techniques, Careers Wales should continue to further develop the Careers Wales CareersCraft.
- Digital badges have the potential to strengthen the outcomes and impact of pupils' participation in work-related experiences. A pilot scheme with schools, businesses, Careers Wales and one or more awarding bodies to develop the use of digital badges could have a big impact on the career development of 14-18-year-olds. (Certificates and in-school digital badges could be trialled with younger pupils). Developing a suite of work placement and work experience badges focusing on sectors of the economy that are important for the future prosperity of Wales would be attractive to local authorities and regional skills partnerships.

Concluding remarks

The current development in careers and work-related experiences have the potential to create a world class careers and work-related education system. Strong relationships between schools, businesses and the nationwide careers service combined with the radical, enabling reforms to the curriculum and qualifications create the ideal conditions for innovation and improvement to thrive.

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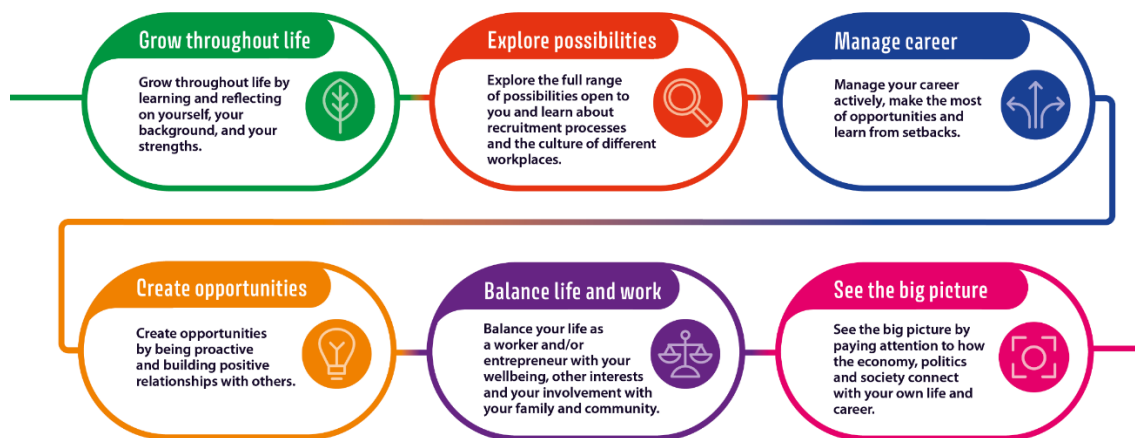
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Appendix A – Examples of CWRE-related learning frameworks

CDI Career Development Framework

The Career Development Institute launched a new framework in 2020 (<https://www.thecdi.net/New-Career-Development-Framework>). The framework has already been translated into Welsh by Careers Wales. It identifies six learning areas (see graphic below) and suggests broad learning outcomes within each area. The framework is designed to be all-age and so far handbooks have been written for primary schools (https://www.thecdi.net/write/Framework/CDI_124-Framework-Handbook_for_schools-v5.pdf) and secondary schools (https://www.thecdi.net/write/Framework/CDI_107-Framework_Handbook-web_Updated.pdf).

Whereas other career development models simply highlight the importance of career exploration, the CDI framework goes further in stressing the importance of enabling learners to create opportunities for themselves, i.e. to be enterprising in the management of their careers. The framework ventures into other new learning areas by encouraging schools to focus on learning related to life-work balance (i.e. healthy living and working) and the big picture (e.g. issues related to social justice and sustainability).



New Brunswick

The New Brunswick framework is a cognitive learning model based on linear career thinking (see the main headings in the table below). This approach does not correspond with the way that some individuals will approach their career development, i.e. through 'learning by doing' rather than academic discourse. Many of the learning statements are written in language that children and young people will find difficult to understand. Sometimes, the attempts to show progression in learning seem arbitrary and unrealistic. The framework is not without its merits but schools are likely to find it unmanageable to implement with large numbers of students. They are more likely to use it selectively as a bank of possible statements to draw on.

THINKING ABOUT MY POTENTIAL CAREER PATHWAY

Developing an informed vision for the future linked to my interests, preferences, values, and abilities

- Developing an informed career pathway plan for my future
- Understanding how my learning can help secure a desirable career pathway
- Understanding that global competencies will help me achieve my preferred future
- Developing an informed career pathway with labour market information
- Recognizing how career development/transition planning supports positive mental health
- Understanding how access to desirable work is not always fair and equitable
- Understanding that I am influenced in my choices by who I see represented in various career pathways
- Understanding that there are additional supports available to help me achieve my preferred career pathway

EXPLORING MY POTENTIAL CAREER PATHWAY

Critically investigating the labour market and the career pathways that I can expect to find most fulfilling

- Interacting with school counsellors around career guidance
- Making career connections when visiting locations outside of the school
- Developing the knowledge and skills needed to access work
- Understanding the benefits of engaging in work integrated learning (e.g., Coop, apprenticeships, internships)
- Engaging in career conversations
- Understanding the realities and possibilities of standard and non-standard employment
- Making use of online tools in career development
- Understanding the range of post-secondary pathway education/training/community opportunities
- Planning for transition in early learning, school and beyond

EXPERIENCING MY POTENTIAL CAREER PATHWAY

Learning about career pathways of interest by engaging in frequent and ongoing career connected experiential learning

- Engaging in authentic career-connected experiences
- Exploring the realities and possibilities of working (paid/unpaid) alongside education
- Exploring the possibility of volunteering alongside education

Appendix B – Digital CWRE badges and online portfolios

A digital badge is a visual representation of a learner's achievement. Badges can be created by schools, awarding bodies or employers to record and recognise pupils' achievements from participating in both formal and informal learning and assessment experiences. When a pupil has earned a badge they can display it in an online portfolio, a personal website or attach it to an online CV or application form. Clicking the badge will reveal information about the issuer, the criteria for earning the badge, the evidence or assessment used to verify the achievement and the date it was earned. They can be shared online through social media, email, or other digital platforms, and can be displayed on digital resumés, personal websites, or online portfolios. Over time, issuers can develop a suite of badges to provide a progressive learning pathway for pupils (Ash, 2012).

Digital badges are becoming increasingly popular. Open badges from Mozilla (<http://openbadges.org/>) is a free format that enables organisations to create their own badges. Paid for platforms are also available.

Badges can make CWRE learning and assessment exciting and fun. They harness 'internal' motivation through the types of tasks pupils perform and 'external' motivation through the award of the badge itself (Bettany, 2016). They will also help to promote higher-level learning by promoting metacognitive understanding and reflection. Badges also develop pupils' digital and social media skills.

Useful links

Ash, K. (2012) "Digital Badges' Would Represent Students' Skill Acquisition' Education Week 05:03 pp 24-30 [Accessed online <http://www.edweek.org/dd/articles/2012/06/13/03badges.h05.html>]

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Examples of badges (created by Cegnet)

Employability Badge

Awarded for having demonstrated and evidenced the employability skills expected of you during a work placement or equivalent experience.

Badge mission

Task 1 – Showing personal responsibility

Arrive on time; wear suitable clothing; listen to instructions; show that you are making an effort; keep your workspace tidy and observe health and safety procedures

Task 2 – Working in a team

Contribute to getting the work done that you are asked to do to the best of your ability; offer to help others with their tasks when you have finished what you are doing

Task 3 – Caring for customers

Greet customers and clients in the proper way; provide them with a good service and if you cannot help them, refer them to someone in the organisation who can

Not sure how to go about winning the badge?

Employability is about showing that you have the personal and social skills to get and keep a job.

A digital diary or log is a useful way of recording your experience. You can ask your supervisor or teacher to add comments, saying what you did well, and take photos, e.g. of you serving customers.

Careers librarian badge

Awarded for having demonstrated and evidenced the skills needed to maintain the information resources in the school's careers library for at least one term.

Badge mission

Task 1 – Library stock

Use a careers library classification system to code resources; label, date and file new information; order and/or download new resources

Task 2 – Displays and presentations

Keep the careers library tidy; put up signs, posters and displays; keep noticeboards up-to-date; give introductory talks to small groups of students

Task 3 – Users' enquiries

Welcome students and help them find the information they need including printed and digital resources; show users how to borrow or get copies of resources;

Not sure how to go about winning the badge?

Keep a training record – these will be the notes you make on the training you are given to be a careers librarian by the school librarian and the careers teacher and/or careers adviser. It could include a list of your duties, how to catalogue resources, how to make a good display, how to show other students how to use a particular careers programme, how to make resources accessible to users with special needs, etc.

Keep a work log so that you have a record of your work plan (i.e. the jobs you planned to do including details of any other jobs that library or careers staff ask you to do. Your work log could include:

- Examples of the questions you ask other students in order to find out what they are looking for and then what you do depending on their reply
- how you helped other students to find the 'best' information for what they wanted to find out
- how you encouraged other students to

Ask a member of staff to sign, date and comment on your training record and work log.

Take photos of any posters or displays that you create. A national celebration event such as Apprenticeships Week or British Science Week is a good opportunity to raise awareness of the school's careers resources relating to it.

Save a digital copy of a poster or leaflet that you made to show other students how to find and use the school's careers information resources.

Save a copy of a PowerPoint presentation you made, e.g. for a digital display screen around school, for a talk to a small group of students.

Careers explorer badge

Awarded for having demonstrated and evidenced the skills needed to draw up a shortlist of jobs that interest you, researched information about one of those jobs in more detail and explained its attractions and challenges for you.

Badge mission

Task 1 – Shortlist of jobs

Use a matching and elimination process to draw up a shortlist of 5-10 jobs that interest you and that you could consider as possible future career options

Task 2 – Job study

Research one of the jobs on your shortlist referring to more than one source of information and record key details such as description of the work, personal qualities and skills needed for the job, entry requirements and what the prospects are like, including earnings potential

Task 3 - Reflection

Explain why the job you have researched could be a good match for you and anything you are not sure about; outline what you intend to do next to carry on exploring your career options

Not sure how to go about winning the badge?

One way of drawing up a shortlist of jobs that might suit you (Task 1) is to answer a careers questionnaire about your interests and skills that gives you matched job suggestions from which you can choose between 5 and 10 jobs that you would like to investigate further. Many careers websites for young people have this kind of questionnaire. Your school may be able to recommend one for you to use that lets you download your results and save them in the form of an action plan.

You can gather information about one of the jobs on your shortlist (Task 2) in many different ways, e.g. look at the printed and online resources in the school library, search for articles on the internet and in the media, talk to family and friends, interview employers who come into school or have a stand at a careers fair. You could present your job study as a document, a PowerPoint or make a video of yourself giving a talk to the class about the job you have researched.

To carry out your reflection (Task 3), you could have a discussion with your tutor or write a reflection in your diary, blog or personal digital space (e.g. digital record of achievement).

Careers Ambassador badge

Awarded for having demonstrated and evidenced the skills needed to contribute to the planning, delivery and evaluation of the careers programme by helping the careers staff for at least one term

Badge mission

Task 1 – Help other students

Tell students about upcoming careers events and resources that could be useful to them

Task 2 – Give feedback to staff

Let careers staff know what other students think about the careers programme

Task 3 – Ambassadors

Assist careers staff at school careers events and activities

Not sure how to go about winning the badge?

Careers ambassadors are volunteers who help the careers staff to run the careers programme. They might give important messages to tutor groups, be on duty in the careers library or take part in a focus group discussion about the careers programme. They might also help with the running of a careers event by meeting and greeting parents and other students, looking after visitors and generally helping with the organisation of the event.

Keep a record of participation, e.g. training that you are given, planning meetings with careers staff, duties undertaken.