



# TOOLKITS FOR MANAGING EMPLOYER-LED INPUTS INTO SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES



## Toolkit 3: Work-related employment project with an employer

### Outline of activity

Facilitating and encouraging a group of students to work on a project with an employer provides them with a valuable experience where they can develop key employability skills. Through undertaking work-related tasks in a real work environment, students can learn about the roles and responsibilities in the workplace and increase their confidence.

Possible skills developed:

- Problem solving.
- Teamwork.
- Communication skills – written and verbal.
- Flexibility.
- Creativity.
- Resilience.

Taking part in such a project provides students with concrete examples to include on their CVs and applications and can help them to consider taking part in further projects such as National Citizenship Service, or feel more self-assured about making their next steps including moving onto apprenticeships, sixth form, college or university.

#### **Choosing a project:**

You could choose a project for your school that is already being offered at other schools, for example, The Engineering Development Trust or Crest Awards (see useful contacts). Alternatively, you could work with an employer to devise your own project, tailored to the needs of your students.

Your project choice may depend on:

- The students taking part, e.g. age, number of students, student interests or requirements.
- Length of the project.
- The level of employer support and time available.
- Amount of time students are allowed off timetable.
- Tasks achievable within the timeframe.

**Case Study:**

- 200 year 10 students from five different schools in the Stroud district took part in the Practical Learning Project; this involved each group working with a local employer.
- A local employer was assigned to each school group and a challenge was agreed with the school lead.
- Students were briefed and completed some research about the employer.
- Students underwent an initial visit to the employer.
- The employer came to a lesson to present the challenge, provided relevant information, suggested activities and answered any questions.
- The school groups allocated roles and responsibilities and started planning.
- Each school group spent a total of 12 hours working on their project, during ASDAN, PSHE and PE lessons.

**The projects included:**

- Designing an app for a local skate park.
- Learning how a business works and producing an apprenticeship guide.
- Finding innovative ways to use unused materials, to reduce the amount of waste and financial losses.
- Learning about air conditioning and investigating what air conditioning parts and systems are used in their school.
- Undertaking research to create a customer information guide about batteries.

The activities that individual students and groups took part in included brainstorming, research, debating, drawing, designing, recording activities and progress, calculating costs, preparing YouTube clips (filming and editing), testing durability of materials, producing products and creating a storyboard. All participants presented their projects outcomes to a large audience, sharing what they had learned and achieved from taking part. A certificate was awarded to each student.

Outcome: The Practical Learning Project surpassed the expectations of teachers, students and employers, in terms of students' personal confidence and skill development.

Although this project involved five different schools, it could be run within one school, with a final presentation to the leadership team, governors and/or other students.

**Resources and materials needed**

- Action plan or list of project aims and objectives.
- Materials for the project: this will vary by project and employer.
- IT equipment, e.g. for research and presentations.
- Certificates for completion of the project.
- Evaluation sheets: employer and student.

## Activity considerations

- A lot of time and commitment from the school/college, employer and students will be needed to run this activity.
- The project needs to be achievable within the timeframe given.
- When can work on the project take place? During ASDAN, PSHE or Enrichment type lessons, lunchtimes or after school.
- How will you encourage students to take part?
- Are there be any additional costs, such as transport or materials?
- Do you need a risk assessment? Are there any health & safety implications?

## SMART objectives

- ✓ Students work on and complete a successful project, linked to an employer over an agreed period of time.
- ✓ Students build their confidence and develop employability skills.
- ✓ Students learn about the world of work and the different roles that are involved in a project e.g. project manager, finance manager.
- ✓ Students have concrete experiences that they can record on their CVs and future applications.
- ✓ Students feel more confident and are better prepared for their next steps, such as apprenticeships/college/sixth form/university.

### How to measure success:

- Through student and employer verbal feedback.
- Through final presentation.
- Through student and employer evaluation forms.

## Feedback from similar activities

Year 10 comment: *"I feel really proud to have been seen to be working as part of a group; this is something that I have not always found easy."*

Teacher comment: *"I can't say enough how valuable this project has been for the students, as you'll see from their comments. Their confidence, in particular, has greatly increased."*

Employer comment: *"The students stretched their imagination and experience, together with participating in a public presentation, which will have added enormous benefit to each individual."*

## Timeline of activities



<b>3-6 months before</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you want to achieve? Identify which group of students. How long will it run for? During which lessons?</li> <li>• Contact employer/s with request and what you are trying to achieve, estimated time commitment, audience.</li> <li>• Arrange meeting with employer to discuss plans.</li> <li>• Book resources and equipment.</li> <li>• Advise all staff that project is happening; update school calendar.</li> <li>• Advertise, promote and brief students/parents and any supporting teachers.</li> <li>• Prepare materials.</li> <li>• Who can take photographs?</li> <li>• If additional costs involved, will students need to raise funds, or is there any funding available?</li> </ul>
<b>Week before</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers visit school to present/start the project:</li> <li>• Greet employers, offer water, tea or coffee.</li> <li>• Introduce guest to students, prompt questions if needed.</li> <li>• Send any materials to Reprographics Department.</li> <li>• Thank employer.</li> </ul>
<b>Day before</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect printed materials.</li> </ul>
<b>During the project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up resources, equipment and rooms.</li> <li>• Plan.</li> <li>• Agree roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Start activities.</li> <li>• Review and record progress.</li> <li>• Email employer with questions if needed.</li> <li>• Update employer with progress.</li> <li>• Take photographs.</li> </ul>
<b>Week after/ month after</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students write/email employer to thank them for their time and input.</li> <li>• Issue and review evaluation forms.</li> <li>• Arrange presentation date, invite employer, leadership team etc.</li> <li>• Review the project - have the outcomes been achieved? Could it run again next year? Write-up report and include recommendations.</li> <li>• Check permission for photographs.</li> <li>• Write up newsletter/website article.</li> </ul>