



TOOLKITS FOR MANAGING A COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF INDUSTRY VISITS FOR SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STAFF AND STUDENTS



Education & Skills
Funding Agency

gfirst LEP
growing gloucestershire



European Union
European
Social Fund

Toolkit 1: Visit to local college or training provider for hands-on vocational tasters

Toolkit abstract	
Duration of visit	½ day – 1 day visit
Key beneficiaries	<p>Students studying to KS4/5 and in particular;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • those expressing interest in vocationally-based full-time courses <i>or</i> • those considering applying for apprenticeships • Students making post-16 and post-18 education choices, particularly those expressing interest in vocational choices
	<p>Staff teaching students to KS4/5 and in particular;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff teaching vocational subjects e.g. Health and Social Care, Early Years Education, I.C.T., and D.T. • Careers and other CEIAG staff in schools wishing to gain deeper insights into vocational courses on offer at local colleges and training providers
Gatsby Benchmarks associated with this activity	7
Activity aim	The aim of this visit is for students and staff to gain greater insights into vocational courses and apprenticeship options offered post-16 and post-18, and to experience practical hands-on experience of particular vocational areas taught by further education colleges and training providers.

Toolkit 1: Visit to local college or training provider for hands-on vocational tasters

Section 1: First considerations before visit

1.1 Key questions to ask before initiating contact

1.1.1 What learning outcomes do I want for my students from the visit?

Knowledge	
What do my students need to find out about the vocational areas they have expressed interest in?	What information do they need from the visit to help them make informed careers decisions?
What currently studied subjects does the visit link to?	What key questions do I want them to ask whilst there?
Skills	
Specific skills or aptitudes needed for the vocational areas visited	What qualifications/skills will they need to study or apply for an apprenticeship in this area?
Importance of English, maths, ICT to vocational areas visited	Any other important career-related information e.g. unique qualifications needed to progress into a specific vocational area/career direction?

1.1.2. What do I want from the visit?

What are the objectives of the activity for the school and its students?	Are there networking opportunities?
What do I want learn about vocational education from this visit?	What will success look like?
What questions might I want to ask?	What activity will I plan in school to follow up the event?
Am I approaching the right provider i.e. do they offer the taster experiences that I and my students are looking for	Has the school already visited this establishment before and if so was it beneficial?

Toolkit 1: Visit to local College or Training provider for hands-on vocational tasters

1.1.3. What does the organisation want from the visit?

What are the main objectives of the activity for the employer (and employees)?	Is it looking to recruit new students onto its full time or apprenticeship programmes?
Does it want any specific recognition e.g. articles in school newsletter or local press?	Will my students be asked to take part in promotional activity for the college and if so, what do I need to do about it?

1.1.4. Group size, access considerations, budget and staffing considerations

How many students do I intend to take – i.e. whole year group or selected students. Is the group size realistic?	How will I ensure that this visit appeals to students with specific SEND needs e.g. autism? What specific access arrangements do I need to consider?
Does this fit in with the school calendar and policy with regard to taking Year 11 students out before exams?	Have I obtained parental consent and also managed refusals?
Can I use the school mini-bus or will I need to hire a vehicle to take the students there? Ensure that you ask the college or training provider to reserve adequate parking spaces	How many staff need to accompany me on the visit?
If a bus is used, will the school pay, or will there be a charge?	
Do I have a robust care plan and emergency contacts for parents?	Will I need to write a bespoke risk assessment or will the host write one for the activity?

Toolkit 1: Visit to local College or Training provider for hands-on vocational tasters

Section 2 – Research prior to making contact with college or training provider

2.1. Key considerations

Visit the website of the preferred college or training provider to do some desktop research about the vocational areas offered and qualifications offered.	Speak to representatives of colleges and training providers when they are at events organised by your own school e.g. at a careers fair/post-16 event or practice interview sessions etc.
Often taster visits are promoted via the website and an existing programme will already be in place to support this type of activity.	Speak to your designated careers lead in school as they will often have pre-existing contact with local colleges and training providers and may be able to broker the visit for you.
Important points to remember!	
Colleges and training providers will have very similar pressures to yourself e.g. timetabling and staffing visits around delivery of their own lessons.	
Colleges often will have existing arrangements for organising visits, so it is often better to contact them at the start of an academic year to help them to plan resources around your visit. In some cases it is advisable to contact the college towards the end of an academic year to help them timetable your visit in the new academic year.	

Toolkit 1: Visit to local College or Training provider for hands-on vocational tasters

Section 3 - Making contact with college or training provider

3.1. Preferred method(s) of communication with college/training provider

Communication method	Benefit	Drawback
<p>First preferred method Make contact via e-mail or phone with designated Schools Liaison Team or Marketing Team via contact details provided on college/training provider website.</p>	These teams receive similar requests from other schools and will be able to respond with an “off the peg” solution to your request.	You may want a bespoke visit which doesn’t easily fit into the timetabling and staffing demands of the college/training provider.
<p>Second preferred method Make contact via e-mail with an “info @” e-mail address requesting an opportunity to arrange a taster visit.</p>	Your request will be forwarded to the appropriate team to respond to.	The e-mail address on the website could be out of date, not answered regularly or gets sent to the wrong team to reply to.
<p>Third preferred method If you know them, liaise directly with a departmental lead.</p>	Good if you are planning to visit one department.	They will often be able provide tasters in their specific academic area, but likely won’t be able to offer/organise bespoke activity in subject areas other than their own.
<p>Important points to remember!</p>		
<p>Whilst informal links with members of staff at colleges and training providers are encouraged, the member of staff in question may not be in a position to broker your visit on spec. so contact the relevant person if in doubt.</p>		
<p>Contact the college/training provider at least six weeks in advance of the visit. This enables adequate time to timetable your visit and to resource it appropriately especially if you want your students to visit multiple academic departments.</p>		

Toolkit 1: Visit to local College or Training provider for hands-on vocational tasters

3.2. What to include in your initial e-mail/say in your call

Providing correct and full contact details	
As designated lead, always ensure that you use your full name and title and supply full contact details for your school at the foot of your e-mail.	Copy other members of your team into the e-mail so that the college has alternative contacts.
What do you want from them to make the visit a success?	
Explain that you would like to organise a taster for x amount of students on x date. If you can specify preferred time of day this helps.	Specify preferred taster areas e.g. Health and Social care and I.T. where these are known/have previously been identified.
If your students want to try a range of tasters perhaps arrange to visit the college/training provider to discuss this in more detail. Often they will suggest a menu of choices which can be selected from by your students prior to the visit.	Specify year groups and age of students coming as often activities can be geared to a specific group.
Important points to remember!	
Before making contact, remember to be clear about how many students you want to take, when you want to visit, and any special requirements individuals may have.	
Be confident that it fits in within your timetable and that the college/training provider also has time to accommodate your visit.	

Toolkit 1: Visit to local College or Training provider for hands-on vocational tasters

3.3. Next steps after making initial contact

Some points to consider before the visit	
Be ready for compromise. You may have a whole year group who would like to visit, but the college/training provider may not have capacity to fulfil all of your expectations	If you have time, take the opportunity to arrange a pre-taster visit to look around and ask questions
Most colleges will offer a menu of choices for your students but, in practice, they will only have time to visit two academic areas to make the taster worthwhile.	Where a menu has been offered ensure that choices are returned to the college training provider in good time for them to resource the sessions
Whilst there is often flexibility over taster choices, it is recommended that students are certain what they want to do as last minute changes of choice can be tricky to facilitate on the day of the visit	Ensure you know; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific timings for event • Who the staff member(s) are; who you will meet • Number of parking bay/car park and are aware of any specifics concerning entry to the site e.g. security gates, one-way systems
Housekeeping	
Ensure that where the college/training provider has specified a dress code or specific requirements for the visit that this has been communicated to the students, e.g. sports kit or foot sizes for work boots	If complimentary refreshments <u>aren't</u> offered ensure that students bring packed lunches or have cash to use in the cafeteria or tuck shop. Pay attention to any special dietary needs as the college may be able to help here.

Toolkit 1: Visit to local College or Training provider for hands-on vocational tasters

Section 4 – Planning the Activity

4.1 SMART Objectives for visit

1) Activity prior to visit (students)	Measure of success
1.1. Students briefed to ask at least one question about the taster visit e.g. what type of jobs could I obtain if I did this course?	Student to complete reflective log or take part in a survey after session to discuss what they learned and what question(s) they asked whilst at the college.
2) Activity during the visit (staff)	Measure of success
2.1. Staff to observe and assess activities carried out by students and reflect on ways to improve the experience and feed this back to college contact.	Verbal or written feedback given to the student on the day or afterwards in response to comments made by the student in the reflective log. Verbal or written feedback given to the provider staff on the day of the taster.
2.2. Ensure that all students and staff complete feedback forms provided by the college/training provider to improve future experience.	All staff and students present submit forms to college staff at the end of the taster session.
3) Activity during the visit (students)	Measure of success
3.1. Student to attend one first choice taster and one back-up taster.	Student to complete reflective log to discuss what they liked and/or disliked about their choices, and suggest a different area of interest in the case that either or both choices were unsatisfactory.
3.2. Student to suggest what could be improved for future visits	Student to complete reflective log to discuss what they would improve upon for a future visit, or for other students having the same experience.
4) Activity after the visit (students)	Measure of success
4.1. Student to complete a reflective log of their experience.	In addition to the above, reflective log could include response to the following sample questions; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best part of the activity was (why) • The part I enjoyed the least of the activity was (why) • Did you enjoy the day (why) and, if not, why? • Have you learnt something new from the experience? if so, what? • Do you think you know more about vocational subjects? Describe what you have learnt from the visit.
5) Activity after the visit (staff)	Measure of success
5.1. Staff to collect contact details from other members of staff met on the day of the visit to maintain contact following the activity.	Business cards collected or contact details exchanged with staff present on the day.

Toolkit 1: Visit to local College or Training provider for hands-on vocational tasters

Section 5 – After the Activity

5.1. Follow-on activity

5.1.1 Follow-on steps for the students

- Ensure the student has information to enable them to attend follow up events e.g. open evenings or know how to apply for courses or apprenticeships in the vocational area of interest.
- As above, ensure all students write a reflective log about the experience outlining what they learned, e.g. unexpected things about the activity, likes and dislikes, and questions to establish if this activity helped them to plan their subsequent career steps.

5.1.2. Follow-on steps for the staff

- It is often sufficient to thank the staff on the day, but an e-mail or call following the visit is often welcome and ensures continuity, especially if the organiser doesn't attend the event in person.
- Provide feedback when requested and anecdotal observations to host staff.
- Publish your experiences on your website including photos and videos and share with your team and the college (data protection permitting).
- As outlined above, ensure that accurate records have been made of the names and positions of staff met on the day of the activity.
- Make timely suggestions about improvements which can be made to the learning experience to your team and the provider.
- Brief other colleagues about the experience and celebrate the successes of individual students and any particular noteworthy moments

Section 6 – Timeline

6.1. Timeline

- 6 months – 6 weeks prior to visit contact college/training provider to organise visit.
- 2 weeks prior to visit, pre-visit the provider where time allows.
- Day of event – attend and leave at times specified.
- 1-2 days after the event, call or e-mail the college/training provider to thank them, provide any feedback, and follow up on any student queries.
- 1-2 days after the event, ensure you are on the circulation list for periodical newsletters/information e-mails published by the provider.
- 3-4 days after the event, publish pictures, write an article and share with the provider.
- Up to 12 weeks after the taster, ensure that students have attended follow up events including open evenings.
- Up to 6 months after make contact again with the college/training provider to schedule next taster visit

Toolkit 1: Visit to local college or training provider for hands-on vocational tasters

Section 7 – Information Sources

7.1. Additional resources and helpful contacts

Bridge Training <http://bridgetrainingltd.co.uk/>

Cirencester College <https://www.cirencester.ac.uk/>

GET Training <http://get-trained.org/>

GROWS/GAP Project [https://www.grows.ac.uk/activities-and-events?category\[\]=44](https://www.grows.ac.uk/activities-and-events?category[]=44)

Hartpury College <http://www.hartpury.ac.uk/>

Prospect Training <http://www.prospect-training.org.uk/>

South Gloucestershire and Stroud College <http://www.sgscol.ac.uk/>

Warwickshire Colleges Group <https://www.wcg.ac.uk/page/92/colleges>