



## Unit 27: Work Experience in Business

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### Delivery guidance

#### Approaching the unit

This practical unit will require learners to investigate, plan and carry out 40 hours of work-related learning in an appropriate and safe manner. Learners should be encouraged to research a number of appropriate work experience placements before securing a final placement.

This unit is well suited to being run over a long period of time, either in a 'long and thin' format over the course of the academic year or with blocks of time during each term/semester.

To complete this unit your learners will need access to a range of research materials, which could include the internet, journals or magazines, and books.

You could use a range of delivery methods in this unit, for example:

- discussions – class and small group discussions on work experience and careers, and applying for appropriate placements
- individual or group presentations – examples of types of placement and their benefits to the learner
- case studies – illustrating accidents in the workplace
- videos – interviews or work experience.

Group work is also an acceptable form of delivery but you must ensure that learners individually produce work for assessment that meets the assessment criteria.

You can involve local employers in the delivery of this unit by inviting them as:

- guest speakers
- mentors for learners
- providers of business materials as basis for case studies and exemplars
- providing opportunities for work experience for learners.

#### Delivering the learning aims

For learning aim A, learners should research a variety of appropriate opportunities for work-related learning. You could ask guest speakers from different businesses to talk about available work placements before asking learners to research a minimum of three realistic opportunities for their work experience in business with an aim of securing one appropriate opportunity. This could be part-time or voluntary work in a suitable business. Learners should then plan and apply for this opportunity using their own research and materials such as CVs and application forms that you could provide.

For learning aim B, learners should secure one appropriate opportunity and carry out work experience in an appropriate and safe manner for a minimum of 40



hours. You should confirm that the learner has researched the placement thoroughly and has all key information before starting the work. The learners should arrange pre-placement visits and report their findings back to you in order to confirm this. You should also ensure that the learners know that they need to produce a report in which they reflect on their experiences during the placement. This could be achieved by introducing logbooks in which learners should gain feedback from their employers whenever possible to allow them to make an informed evaluation of the development of their skills throughout the duration of the work experience and set goals for future personal and professional development. Your learning centre may wish to communicate with work placements to ensure that they are aware of the assessment criteria that learners are working towards, and to arrange observations of the learners while they are at the placements to gain feedback on their performances.

For learning aim C, learners will need to compile an individual reflective report that evaluates their active participation in work experience. The report should define the role undertaken and explain activities that they carried out. It should use feedback from others to assess their performance, recommend improvements and to set future goals. Learners may benefit from working in a group to share their experiences so as to help them expand their evaluation on their work experience, and to draw reasoned conclusions as to how it could support their future careers. Talks from previous learners who have undergone the experience may also be of value.



Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
<b>A</b> Investigate opportunities for work-related learning	<b>A1</b> Work-related learning <b>A2</b> Outcomes and benefits of work experience <b>A3</b> Planning for work experience	A resource portfolio including details of research into a placement.
<b>B</b> Carry out work experience in an appropriate and safe manner	<b>B1</b> Induction <b>B2</b> Role and tasks <b>B3</b> Working safely	A diary/journal/log/online blog and portfolio.  This will cover tasks done and refer to health and safety.
<b>C</b> Reflect on work experience undertaken and its influence on own personal and professional development	<b>C1</b> Learning from work placement <b>C2</b> Using feedback and setting goals	Reflection for a personal/professional development portfolio (PDP).

### Assessment guidance

This unit is internally assessed through two assignments. The first covers learning aims A and B, and the second covers learning aim C.

All learners must independently generate evidence that can be authenticated. The main sources of evidence are likely to be a portfolio and a diary/journal/log/online blog.

BTEC assessors should complete observation records, while people such as work colleagues can complete witness statements. Observation records alone are not sufficient sources of learner evidence; the original learner-generated evidence must support them.

It is essential that you allow learners to individually select their own examples of businesses and communications messages to investigate, and the research evidence to include in their work, if they are to show the individual creativity required to achieve the universal distinction criterion.

## Getting started

This gives you a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based around the recommended assessment approach in the specification.

### Unit 27: Work Experience in Business

#### Introduction

Introduce the unit to learners by means of a group discussion on what they know about work experience. Then outline the learning aims of the unit.

#### Learning aim A – Investigate opportunities for work-related learning

- Lead a class discussion by asking learners to share an ambition that they have for the future or a job that they would like to try. Learners could make a list of their top five 'dream jobs'.
- Give learners motivational quotes such as 'You've got to find what you love...' (Steve Jobs), 'If you work just for money you will never make it, but if you love what you are doing...success will be yours' (Ray Croc), 'When you have got enough money, making money's boring' (Duncan Bannatyne) and lead a class discussion on the importance of finding the right career path that might get them to their ultimate goals, and how a placement could help them to decide on that path.
- Introduce the different types of placements available such as work experience, voluntary work and part-time work, and ask learners to individually research the type of placements available in the area, and share their findings with the group.
- Ask learners to work in small groups to prepare a PowerPoint presentation that looks at the outcomes and benefits of the different types of placement, and its role in securing learners places in the workplace, on apprenticeships or degree courses (e.g. gaining suitable referees, networking, increasing skills and knowledge, or helping learners to clarify their career goals).
- Ask learners to compile a portfolio of individual research findings on a minimum of three realistic placement opportunities (e.g. part-time work, volunteering or a placement), gaining information on each business (e.g. leaflets, brochures or website information) and the requirements of that business when selecting a candidate, including practical information (hours of work, etc.) as well as specification criteria.
- Guest speakers could be used to talk about placements offered by their businesses. Learners could ask questions on the approach taken to placements by the business and their requirements.
- Give learners a variety of application documents such as job descriptions, person specifications and CVs of 'applicants' and ask them to consider their suitability. Ask learners to work in groups to consider how they would apply for a suitable placement and then report back to the group on their findings.
- Lead a class discussion on interviews, asking learners to share their experiences. Use videos/case studies of 'real' interview situations to look at common interview questions and the style of questions that are usually asked (for example, open/closed, questions about the CV or the business or questions that are easier/harder to answer).
- Ask learners to work in groups of three to research information about a given company and to prepare answers to key interview questions and a list of questions to ask. Learners could then practise their interview technique through role-play, taking turns to act as interviewer, interviewee and observer. Learners could be



supplied with a checklist, or asked to compile their own so as to structure their observation and feedback. After each mock interview, the observer should feed back to the interviewee on their performance, offering advice on how to improve it.

### **Learning aim B – Carry out work experience in an appropriate and safe manner**

- Using the learners' research, lead a discussion on the different businesses and placement roles they have found.
- Ask learners to consider the need for health and safety in the workplace. Introduce case studies from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), e.g. [www.youngworker.co.uk/weo/casestudies/index.htm](http://www.youngworker.co.uk/weo/casestudies/index.htm).
- Introduce the topic of hazard and risks, by showing short videos on workplace safety available from video-sharing websites as an icebreaker activity.
- Ask learners to work in pairs to compile a checklist of hazards that they may encounter in the workplace and how the health and safety practices could be improved. This activity would be enhanced if the learners could undertake an actual assessment in a workplace. Encourage learners to visit a range of businesses in the local high street or nearest town.
- Guest speakers could be used to talk about the induction process, the roles and activities carried out and the importance of other aspects of their businesses, such as health and safety and confidentiality.
- Encourage learners to make a suitable choice for their placement then carry out a pre-placement visit to ensure they have all the key information about the business (e.g. structure and features), are fully informed about their role and responsibilities, and understand the requirements for working safely. Learners could then give a short presentation to the group on their findings.
- Ask learners to consider the knowledge and skills they expect to gain from their placement that will allow them to fully evaluate the influence on their own personal and professional development at the end of the placement.
- Introduce the concept of keeping a logbook to allow the learner to compile a reflective report on their 40-hour placement. Stress the importance of keeping a record and gaining feedback on their performance throughout.

### **Learning aim C – Reflect on work experience undertaken and its influence on own personal and professional development**

- On completion of the placement, ask learners to give a short presentation reflecting on their original thoughts on what they would gain from the placement compared with the reality (e.g. whether they would now like to work in that sector/business, the skills they used, the new skills they gained and the challenges they were faced with).
- Ask learners to complete an individual report, using the feedback they obtained during the placement, and to set themselves future goals for personal and professional development.

## Details of links to other BTEC units and qualifications, and to other relevant units/qualifications

Pearson BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Business (NQF):

This unit links with all other units in the specification, although particularly:

- Unit 21: Training and Development.

## Resources

In addition to the resources listed below, publishers are likely to produce Pearson endorsed textbooks that support this unit of the BTEC Nationals in Business. Check the Pearson website (<http://qualifications.pearson.com/endorsed-resources>) for more information as titles achieve endorsement.

## Textbooks

- Douglas A and O'Neill S – *The Essential Work Experience Handbook*, 3rd revised edition (Gill & Macmillan Ltd, 2010) ISBN 9780717147595.
- Longson S – *Making Work Experience Count*, 2nd revised edition (Robinson, 1999) ISBN 9781857035179.
- Fanthorne C – *Work Placements - A Survival Guide for Students* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) ISBN 9781403934345.

Each of these books contains useful guidance on applying for a work experience placement, health and safety in the workplace and on reviewing your work experience placement.

## Videos

- *Rhod Gilbert's Work Experience Series 1 & 2*  
This series follows comedian Rhod Gilbert as he tries out all manner of different day jobs, including farmer, fireman, tattoo artist and bin man.

## Websites

- <http://businesscasestudies.co.uk>  
Free resource from *The Times* 100 Business Case Studies.
- [www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience](http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience)  
The website of the Health and Safety Executive. It is aimed at employers offering placements, but it does include helpful information about health and safety.
- [www.monster.co.uk](http://www.monster.co.uk)  
This is a job opportunities website for employers and employees.
- [www.my-work-experience.com](http://www.my-work-experience.com)  
This website provides information about work placements for both tutors and learners. It includes information about the different skills required on a work experience placement.



- [www.princes-trust.org.uk/need\\_help/next\\_steps/work\\_experience.aspx](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk/need_help/next_steps/work_experience.aspx)  
This website is for young people aged 16–25 and includes help and advice on work placements.
- [www.prospects.ac.uk/work\\_experience.htm](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/work_experience.htm)  
This website contains a range of career advice, including advice on finding placement opportunities.
- [www.thebigchoice.com/Placements/Advice/Benefits\\_of\\_a\\_Work\\_Placement.html](http://www.thebigchoice.com/Placements/Advice/Benefits_of_a_Work_Placement.html)  
This is a learner and graduate jobsite that includes advice on the benefits of work placements.
- [www.vinspired.com](http://www.vinspired.com)  
This gives volunteering opportunities, which include career related opportunities.
- [www.youngworker.co.uk/weo/casestudies/index.htm](http://www.youngworker.co.uk/weo/casestudies/index.htm)  
This gives case studies from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) that involve young people in the workplace.