

Unit 22: Work Experience in the Travel and Tourism Sector

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| Unit code: | T/600/9677 |
| QCF Level 3: | BTEC National |
| Credit value: | 10 |
| Guided learning hours: | 60 |

● Aim and purpose

This unit develops learners' knowledge and skills to prepare for a work placement, carry it out successfully and evaluate their experience. It will provide an opportunity to gain first-hand experience of working life in a travel and tourism organisation.

● Unit introduction

This unit supports learners in preparing for, and undertaking, work experience within travel and tourism. They will find out which types of organisations are best suited to their skills and personalities and have the potential to make useful contacts for their future career. The placement also provides an opportunity to apply the skills and knowledge developed throughout their course and to collect evidence of real industry practice for both this unit and other units in the qualification.

Learners will prepare for their work experience by seeking out potential placements/employers from a variety of sources, sending letters of enquiry and application. They may have to attend an interview prior to the work experience. They will consider the necessary arrangements for attending the work experience and also determine a code of appropriate behaviour to follow while on work experience.

Learners will set objectives for the experience, including personal, career and curriculum objectives. While undertaking the placement, learners will find out information about the work experience organisation, its products and services and the roles of individuals working there. This information will be presented after the work experience is completed. They will also keep a log of their activities and will be expected to achieve positive feedback on their performance from employers and tutors. Depending on the nature of the placement, learners should also be able to collect a portfolio of evidence for other units.

Following the placement, learners are required to evaluate their own performance and the benefits they have received through undertaking the work experience.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Be able to prepare for a work experience placement in the travel and tourism sector
- 2 Be able to demonstrate the skills, qualities and behaviours needed for effective performance in the workplace
- 3 Know the key features of the chosen work experience organisation
- 4 Be able to evaluate own work experience placement.

Unit content

1 Be able to prepare for a work experience placement in the travel and tourism sector

Potential work placement organisations: eg travel agents, tourist information centres, tour companies, tour operators, transport operators, hospitality providers

Contacts: eg tutors, colleagues, careers advisers, family and friends, human resource departments

Other resources: eg newspapers, trade magazines, centres' placement database, websites, job centres

Constraints: location; transport access; travelling time; hours of work; personal commitments

Complete documentation: letters eg letter of enquiry, letter of application; CV; interview checklist eg company background information, applicant questions; acceptance of offer

Set objectives: personal eg developing new skills; career eg gaining knowledge, networking, gaining experience, qualifications, references; curriculum eg collecting evidence for assignment work

2 Be able to demonstrate the skills, qualities and behaviours needed for effective performance in the workplace

Code of conduct: eg good timekeeping and attendance, demonstration of honesty and reliability, accepting authority, responding to instructions, accepting responsibility, adhering to dress code, using appropriate language, being courteous, adhering to rules and procedures

Demonstration of skills, qualities and behaviours: eg social, technical, problem solving, action planning, self-motivation, customer care, research, personal presentation, honesty, reliability, hard-working

Monitoring progress: keeping own records; employer feedback; tutor review

3 Know the key features of the chosen work experience organisation

Organisation: type; ownership; sector; size; number of employees

Organisation chart: type of structure; line management; lines of communication

Key activities: eg tour operation, sales, providing accommodation, marketing, promotion, support services, provision of information, entertainment

Products and services: eg package holidays, insurance, conference services, accommodation, support for businesses, transportation

Health and safety issues: legislative and regulatory requirements; policies and procedures in the workplace; emergency procedures; security in the workplace

Own role: duties and responsibilities; reporting structure

Other staff roles: duties and responsibilities; reporting structure; progression opportunities

4 Be able to evaluate own work experience placement

Evaluation: attendance; punctuality; skills, qualities and behaviours in the workplace; meeting personal objectives eg technical skills development, interpersonal skills development; meeting career objectives eg employment opportunity enhancement, gaining experience, part-time employment; networking, new contacts, references; meeting curriculum objectives

Supporting evidence: eg diary, logbook, employer feedback records, attendance records, skills audit, witness statements

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

| Assessment and grading criteria | | |
|--|--|---|
| To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to: | To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to: | To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to: |
| <p>P1 use resources and contacts to propose potential work experience placements in the travel and tourism sector, taking into account constraints [CT 1, SM 3]</p> <p>P2 prepare for work experience by completing relevant documentation and setting objectives for the placement [SM 1, SM 2, SM 3]</p> | <p>M1 explain how potential work experience placements could provide opportunities to meet personal, career and curriculum objectives</p> | |
| <p>P3 demonstrate skills, qualities and behaviours during work experience, and adherence to a code of conduct</p> <p>P4 describe key features of the work experience organisation, including own duties and responsibilities</p> | <p>M2 explain how skills, qualities and behaviours have developed during the work experience placement</p> | <p>D1 demonstrate personal effectiveness throughout the work experience process</p> |
| <p>P5 use supporting evidence to evaluate own performance on work experience and in meeting objectives [RL 1, RL 2, RL 3, RL 4, RL 5].</p> | <p>M3 assess the suitability of the designated role and its contribution to meeting objectives.</p> | <p>D2 evaluate the overall success of the work placement, making justified recommendations for improvement.</p> |

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

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|------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Key | IE – independent enquirers | RL – reflective learners | SM – self-managers |
| | CT – creative thinkers | TW – team workers | EP – effective participators |

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

Learners should be encouraged to use a range of information sources to find potential work experience placements. These could include their own personal contacts, the centre's own database of placements previously used, local knowledge and local newspapers. The placements must be within component industries of the travel and tourism sector, as outlined in *Unit 1: Investigating the Travel and Tourism Sector*. Once potential placements have been identified, learners should send out letters of enquiry. Tutors should ensure that learners are well briefed on format and content of letters and practical sessions should be organised to facilitate this. A letter of enquiry is suitable for a speculative placement and a letter of application is suitable where an actual placement is available. It is recommended that tutors carefully monitor letters being sent to potential employers in terms of quality and to ensure that employers are not inundated with letters from several learners. Learners may use their own job as their 'placement' if it is in a travel and tourism organisation. In this case, they should ensure that they negotiate with their employer to do something specific for the duration of the placement which is separate from their usual work. This will enable them to set more meaningful objectives.

Preparation for work experience presents an opportunity for learners to produce or update their CV and to undertake interview practice. This could take place in the school/college environment but, if employers are agreeable, learners could attend a real interview at the potential placement. Tutors should encourage learners to research the placement organisation before interview and to prepare questions for the interviewer. Where appropriate, delivery may be integrated with *Unit 6: Preparing for Employment in Travel and Tourism*.

Tutors should ensure that group discussions take place with learners about the code of behaviour suitable for work experience placements and the type of work that might be undertaken. The purpose is to ensure that learners have realistic expectations and think about the skills they could demonstrate during their placement. During work experience, learners must demonstrate skills, qualities and behaviours, and it would be a useful exercise to make up a checklist, making sure they understand what they mean and how they might be evidenced. Learners will also need to consider the practical issues associated with going on work experience, such as travel, travel costs, appropriate clothing and fitting the placement around other commitments such as a part-time job. Learners are required to set personal, career and curriculum objectives for their work experience. This is a suitable activity for pairs to work on, suggesting objectives for each other. The objectives must be recorded so that learners can return to them later when completing their evaluation. They can be recorded in a variety of ways, for example, as part of a logbook, as a poster or chart, or as a bulleted list.

Learners are required to collect information about the organisation while on placement. Tutors should ensure that learners are clear about what information to collect and how it should be presented. It would be useful to undertake a class study into an organisation, identifying its size and ownership, key activities and products and services and to draw up an organisational chart. Tutors should encourage individual research before the placement so that learners arrive at their placement with a good basic knowledge of the organisation. Tutors should facilitate research into health and safety issues. This could take the form of small-group work, with groups giving presentations on different aspects of health and safety legislation that relate to the operation of the organisation.

Methods of presentation of assessment evidence need to be discussed in advance of the placement. Tutors may need to spend time with learners on the development of appropriate presentation skills, such as oral presentations, written reports or the use of ICT.

Learners are required to carry out an evaluation of their performance on placement. It is essential that they are prepared for this before they start their work experience. They should decide how they will record their activities during the placement and how feedback will be sought from the employer and tutors. If desired, a logbook can be produced by the tutor with space for recording activities undertaken and skills demonstrated. If a logbook is used it should give space for learners to reflect on their experience each day and for analysis of the problems they faced and possible solutions. The logbook could incorporate pages for tutor review after a visit and employer feedback on performance.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way of planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

| Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment |
|---|
| Introduction and overview of the unit and assessment |
| Identification of potential contacts |
| Using different sources to research opportunities |
| Sharing findings |
| Agreeing two potential placements with tutor |
| Group discussion into potential constraints |
| Recording of personal constraints |
| Discussing and agreeing suitable content for letters of enquiry |
| Preparing letters of enquiry |
| Review of different formats for CVs |
| Gathering information for and producing CV |
| Activities to decide on potential objectives: personal, career and curriculum |
| Assignment 1: Preparation for Work Experience (P1, P2, M1) |
| Feedback on assessment |
| Discussing, agreeing and preparing code of conduct as a group |
| What are skills, qualities and behaviours? |
| Class discussion – how they can be evidenced |
| Preparing for and attending interview |
| Preparing for actual placement – research into organisation, planning travel and dress etc |
| Undertaking work experience including researching key features and logging activity: personal log, employer witness statements, tutor observation records |
| Preparation for report on key features of placement |
| Assignment 2: My Work Experience Placement (P3, P4, M2, D1) |
| Presentation |
| Feedback on assessment |

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment

Class discussion on success of placements, good practices and areas for improvement – review of personal log, employer witness statements, tutor observation records, photographs etc

Written evaluation of work experience and success measured against objectives

Assignment 3: My Work Experience Placement (P5, M3, D2)

Evaluation

Feedback on assessment and unit review

Assessment

The assessment criteria can be grouped together to enable learners to expand on one criterion in order to gain higher grades. The links are as follows: P1, P2 and M1; P3, P4, M2 and D1; P5, M3 and D2. Where possible learners should be encouraged and given the opportunity to meet the relevant higher grading opportunities at the same time as they attempt the appropriate pass criteria.

Centres should design their assessment strategies to meet a range of individual needs and the local work environment. Assessment should encourage the learners to apply knowledge gained from this unit and reflect on understanding gained from other units.

It is expected that at least 60 hours of work experience will be carried out. The work experience placement can be achieved through a variety of approaches such as block, weekends, evening or holiday work.

P1 – P2 – M1

To achieve P1, learners should propose two potential work placements, giving details in terms of the type of organisation, potential roles for the learner, and any constraints that may affect the choice of placement. They should have obtained details of the potential placements from a variety of sources such as newspapers, trade magazines and other contacts, and these should be clearly evidenced.

To achieve P2, learners must complete a letter of enquiry or a letter of application, and provide an up-to-date CV, an interview checklist and confirmation of acceptance, for example an email or letter. These need to be for one work placement position only. (If a learner is carrying out the placement at their current job, these documents should be produced, as if this was a new placement and they were not known by the employer.) These documents must be produced in a style and to a level of accuracy that would be appropriate for sending to a potential employer, eg containing no spelling mistakes. These documents could be included in a work experience portfolio.

P2 also requires the setting of appropriate objectives for the placement. The objectives should include personal, career and curriculum objectives. For example, a career objective could be to gain experience of using a computerised reservation system in a hotel.

Those learners aiming to achieve M1 must explain how their two potential placements will provide them with the opportunity to meet the objectives they have set for P2.

P3 – P4 – M2 – D1

To meet the requirements of P3, learners must undertake the placement and describe how they adhered to their code of conduct. For example, they can report on their punctuality, how they dressed and how they responded to instructions. This could be achieved through a logbook which can be designed by the learner, or produced by the tutor. If logbooks have been individually designed, the tutor should ensure that they allow all the necessary information to be recorded, including learner logs, feedback from employer and the tutor's comments. Learners must provide supporting evidence that confirms that they have displayed effective skills, qualities and behaviours when completing the work placement. This evidence should include a tutor review and employer feedback, in the form of observation sheet(s), signed log sheets and witness testimony respectively.

While on work experience, learners need to collect the information needed to achieve P4, although they will report on this after the placement. They must describe the key features of the work experience organisation and include all of the essential unit content given in learning outcome 3. There should be a description of the type of organisation, its key activities, products and services and any health and safety issues specific to the organisation. An organisation chart should be included, clearly showing key roles and line management within the organisation. Where the organisation is large, a specific department could be charted rather than the whole organisation. There should be some general description of staff roles within the organisation, how they interlink and opportunities for progression. There should also be a description of the learners' own role, duties and responsibilities during their work experience within the organisation, including their reporting structure. This evidence could be presented as a written report with appropriate headings, or presented orally with visual aids and supported by a detailed witness statement.

To achieve M2, learners must explain how they developed their skills, qualities and behaviours when completing the work placement. This should relate to specific tasks, activities and incidents that have been documented in log books and supported by employer witness statements.

For D1, learners must be able to demonstrate personal effectiveness throughout the process (eg applying for placement etc), and especially in the workplace. This will be based on tutor observations and will take into account employer feedback including witness testimonies and signed log sheets, also self evaluation and copies of work produced (letters, reports etc). These should confirm that the learner has demonstrated personal effectiveness throughout the work experience process, thereby proving to be a good representative for the centre.

P5 – M3 – D2

For P5, learners should evaluate their performance on the placement in relation to their stated personal, career and curriculum objectives. Their evaluation should draw on the employer testimonies and tutor observations submitted as evidence for P3.

For M3, learners should make some judgement on how their designated job role contributed to meeting objectives. It is possible that there were some shortcomings in the job role and these should be detailed if they impacted on objectives.

For D2, the evaluation should look at the whole work placement. Learners must demonstrate critical evaluation in terms of what went well on the placement and why and how it could have been improved. Recommendations for improvement must be clearly justified.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

| Criteria covered | Assignment title | Scenario | Assessment method |
|------------------|---|---|---|
| P1 P2, M1 | Assignment 1: Preparation for Work Experience | Taking part in work placement Learners research and propose suitable potential placements, using different sources Learners prepare documents for work experience and set personal objectives | Proposals for potential placements and evidence of correctly completed documentation and recording of personal objectives |
| P3, P4, M2, D1 | Assignment 2: My Work Experience Placement | Learners undertake placement, demonstrating appropriate skills, qualities and behaviours and reporting on key features of the organisation | Evidence from tutor or employer reviews Written report or oral presentation on key features of the organisation |
| P5, M3, D2 | Assignment 3: My Work Experience Placement | Learners evaluate their work experience | Evaluation of work experience and recommendations Supporting evidence form tutor and employer |

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC travel and tourism sector suite. This unit has particular links with:

| Level 2 | Level 3 |
|--|--|
| Preparing for Employment in Travel and Tourism | Investigating the Travel and Tourism Sector |
| Developing Employability Skills for Travel and Tourism | The Business of Travel and Tourism |
| | Customer Service in Travel and Tourism |
| | Marketing Travel and Tourism Products and Services |
| | Preparing for Employment in Travel and Tourism |

Essential resources

Learners must be able to undertake a placement of minimum 60 hours within a travel and tourism organisation.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Links must be made with employers within the travel and tourism sector to develop opportunities for work experience.

Indicative reading for learners

Dale G – *BTEC Level 3 National Travel and Tourism Student Book 1* (Pearson 2010) ISBN 9781846907272

Dale G – *BTEC Level 3 National Travel and Tourism Student Book 2* (Pearson 2010) ISBN 9781846907289

Dale G, Kelly M, King C and Jefferies M – *BTEC Level 3 National Travel and Tourism Teaching Resource Pack* (Pearson 2010) ISBN 9781846907296

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS)

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

| Skill | When learners are ... |
|----------------------------|---|
| Creative thinkers | using resources and contacts to propose potential work experience placements in the travel and tourism sector, taking into account constraints [CT 1] |
| Reflective learners | using supporting evidence to evaluate own performance on work experience and in meeting objectives [RL 1, RL 2, RL 3, RL 4, RL 5] |
| Self-managers | using resources and contacts to propose potential work experience placements in the travel and tourism sector, taking into account constraints [SM 3] preparing for work experience by completing relevant documentation and setting objectives for the placement [SM 1, SM 2, SM 3] |

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

| Skill | When learners are ... |
|---------------------|---|
| Team workers | demonstrating skills, qualities and behaviours during work experience, and adherence to a code of conduct |

● Functional Skills – Level 2

| Skill | When learners are ... |
|---|--|
| ICT – Use ICT systems | |
| Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs | using resources and contacts to propose potential work experience placements in the travel and tourism sector |
| Use ICT to effectively plan work and evaluate the effectiveness of the ICT system they have used | planning the assessment of the unit |
| Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval | using resources and contacts to propose potential work experience placements in the travel and tourism sector |
| Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices | ongoing |
| Troubleshoot | as required |
| ICT – Find and select information | |
| Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task | using resources and contacts to propose potential work experience placements in the travel and tourism sector |
| Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose | using resources and contacts to propose potential work experience placements in the travel and tourism sector |
| ICT – Develop, present and communicate information | |
| Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text and tables • images • numbers • records. | preparing for work experience by completing relevant documentation and setting objectives for the placement recording and reflecting on work experience |
| Bring together information to suit content and purpose | preparing for work experience by completing relevant documentation and setting objectives for the placement recording and reflecting on work experience |
| Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience | preparing for work experience by completing relevant documentation and setting objectives for the placement recording and reflecting on work experience |
| Select and use ICT to communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and effectively including storage of messages and contact lists | using resources and contacts to propose potential work experience placements in the travel and tourism sector |
| English | |
| Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts | discussing issues as required on work experience |

| Skill | When learners are ... |
|--|--|
| Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions | using resources and contacts to propose potential work experience placements in the travel and tourism sector |
| Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions effectively and persuasively | preparing for work experience by completing relevant documentation and setting objectives for the placement recording and reflecting on work experience |