

Work placements

Aim

- To introduce young people to the importance of work placements and to prepare for and help them make the most of work placements

Learning intention

- I will learn about the importance of work placements and the key skills required when participating in a work placement

Success criteria

- I can describe why work placements are important
- I can prepare for a work placement
- I can describe how to get the most out of a work placement

Before you start

- Read the [Work Placement Standard](#) which sets out expectations to improve the quality of learning undertaken in the workplace
- Read the [Work experience](#) article on My World of Work
- Download and prepare class resources

Resources and downloads

- Suitable ICT with internet access (we recommend you use the latest versions of Chrome, Firefox or, in the case of Internet Explorer, version 10 or later)
- [PowerPoint presentation](#)

Duration

These are suggested timescales only and will vary dependent on your group:

- 10 mins: What are work placements?
- 10 mins: Why are work placements important?
- 15 mins: Work placement preparation
- 15 mins: Making the most of a work placement
- 15 mins: What to do after a work placement

Suitable for

This activity is suitable for Senior phase: S4 to S6, and college or other means of study.

Suggested activities

What are work placements? (10 mins)

- Ask pupils to work in pairs and think about what comes to mind when you say 'work placements'. They should note down their thoughts
- Ask each pair to feedback one idea. To make it more difficult you could say that no repeats are allowed and see how long they can keep going
- Clarify key points and any misconceptions
- Highlight that work placements have replaced the traditional one week work experience
- Emphasise that work placements are more personalised and flexible e.g. multiple short introductory work placements; timetabled weekly opportunities; a week long opportunity followed by additional opportunities; placements out with school e.g. internships during holidays

Why are work placements important? (10 mins)

- Ask pupils to work in their pairs again and come up with at least one reason why work placements are important
- Highlight key points such as:
 - It will help them to make a decision about whether they are interested in that kind of career
 - Working with other people will help build self-confidence
 - It looks good on your CV, UCAS form or college application
 - It helps to build new skills and you'll make contacts that could help you in the future

Work placement preparation (15 mins)

- Explain the process in your school for pupils to find/access work placements. You can also refer to the article [How to get work experience](#) in My World of Work
- Discuss what you should do in advance of going on a work placement and create a check list. This can be done as a class or in groups. Examples include:
 - Agree the duration of the work placement
 - Set goals you want to achieve and agree them with the employer and school
 - Be aware of the conditions of the placement e.g. the location, dress and behaviour codes
 - Know who the main employer contact is
 - Research the employer

Making the most of a work placement (15 mins)

- Split the class into groups and ask them to consider what behaviours an employer would expect to see in a good employee
- Ask groups to feedback their suggestions. You can also refer to the article [Your school work placement](#) – how to get a head start
- Highlight key points such as:
 - Be friendly – say hello to other employees

- Be on time – in the morning, after breaks and for meetings
 - Pay attention in meetings – you don't want to admit you weren't listening
 - Tidy up after yourself – nobody is here to clean up after you at lunch
 - Be prepared – pack everything you need the night before
 - Follow training and instructions properly – rules are there for a reason
- Discuss what else pupils could do to make the most of the work placement e.g. don't be afraid to ask for help, ask questions, show your initiative and ask for some tasks to get started on and work towards achieving your agreed goals

What to do after a work placement (15 mins)

- As a class or group discuss what you should do after a placement. Examples include:
 - Thank the employer
 - Reflect on your learning and use the placement experience to support career decisions and ongoing learning
 - Ask for feedback from the employer
 - Add any relevant details about the work placement to your CV
 - Write your work placement report
 - Get a reference. Ask if you can add them as a referee on your CV

Next steps and related activities

- Once pupils have a confirmed work placement they can use the check list created in class to prepare for their work placement
- Pupils can explore the Getting a job section on My World of Work for further advice on work placements, interviews, CVs and more
- Invite employers to give class talks on what to expect in the workplace (you can use [Marketplace](#) on My World of Work to organise this)

Curriculum links

This activity is designed to support:

Career Management Skills	
Self	I develop and maintain a positive self-image.
Strengths	I build on my strengths and achievements.
	I draw on my experiences and on formal and informal learning opportunities to inform and support my career choices.
Horizons	I understand that there are a wide variety of learning and work opportunities that I can explore and are open to me.
Networks	I use information and relationships to secure, create and maintain work.
	I develop and maintain a range of relationships that are important for my career journey.

Career Education Standard 'I can statements'	
Senior Phase	<p>I can identify the skills I have learnt across the curriculum, how these relate to the world of work and can apply these appropriately during work placements and other work-related learning</p> <p>I can consistently demonstrate the skills, attributes and behaviours needed to sustain and progress my career</p> <p>I can identify and access support networks that will help me into a positive and sustained destination beyond school</p> <p>I can describe the rights and responsibilities placed on employers and employees and how these relate to creating a positive, productive and sustainable work environment</p>

Experience and outcomes	
Health and wellbeing across learning	<p>Planning for Choices and Changes</p> <p>HWB 4-19a</p> <p>Based on my interests, skills, strengths and preferences, I am supported to make suitable, realistic and informed choices, set manageable goals and plan for my further transitions.</p> <p>HWB 4-20a</p> <p>I am investigating different careers/occupations, ways of working, and learning and training paths. I am gaining experience that helps me recognise the relevance of my learning, skills and interests to my future life.</p>
Health and wellbeing across learning	<p>Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing</p> <p>HWB 4-11a</p> <p>I make full use of and value the opportunities I am given to improve and manage my learning and, in turn, I can help to encourage learning and confidence in others.</p>