



BM6 EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKPLACE FOR SEND, AP OR PRU



WITH VIRTUAL AND DISTANCE LEARNING ASIDE, EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKPLACE HAS ALWAYS NEEDED A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT APPROACH WITHIN SEND, AP OR PRU SCHOOLS. THIS DOCUMENT SHOULD GIVE A CLEAR OUTLINE OF THE OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND HOW THESE WOULD MEET THE BENCHMARK ALLOWING YOU TO MARK YOURSELF ACCORDINGLY.

BM6 – EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKPLACE

- 1.** By the age of 16, every student should have had at least one experience of a workplace, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.
- 2.** By the age of 18, every student should have had one further such experience, additional to any part-time jobs they may have.

[Link to the CEC Redefine experiences of the workplace document](#)

EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKPLACE OPTIONS:

EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKPLACE HAS MOVED FORWARD OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS, MORE SO OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS DUE TO THE ADDITIONAL BARRIERS CREATED BY THE COVID19 PANDEMIC.

It is important to highlight that our focus should no longer be just about Work Experience but instead about Experiences of the Workplace. This will make a huge difference when planning to meet the elements of Benchmark 6.

We hope to make your Experience of the Workplace options clear so you have choices for all your students. As we know one size doesn't fit all, so you may find a mixture of the following will allow you to reach BM6 for all of your students that are deemed appropriate. Remember if you are completing the SEND Compass question it states 'for whom it is deemed appropriate'. There is no guidance on 'deemed appropriate' this is your call. We would however suggest you make a note on the students' profile in compass or your internal logs as to how you come to that decision.

TRADITIONAL EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKPLACE (WORK EXPERIENCE)

Traditional Experience of the Workplace would involve linking with a local employer that would be willing, suitable, and able to welcome a student to their workplace setting for a few consecutive days in line with the school day.

This exposure to the workplace would see the students partaking in activities that employees of the workplace would normally do. If possible, the students would rotate around the different sectors or areas of the business allowing an insight into the entire business.

You could even prepare your students for their Experience of the Workplace by writing a CV or undertaking a mock interview prior to starting with the organisation.

If this option is viable, it is imperative that the employers' insurance is checked to be valid and up to date and a risk assessment carried out. A pre-site visit for the students would also be encouraged.

IN-HOUSE EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKPLACE

In-house experiences of the workplace can be a great option for those students who will benefit from remaining in a known environment.

To be a valid Experience of the workplace it is important that work shadowing takes place, activities and tasks are completed and potential careers are explored through conversation and research.

Students should be encouraged to think about what they need for their day/time ahead with that staff member. Options within school could be, supporting the maintenance team with general gardening and school maintenance, joining a teacher, joining a teacher's assistant, working with the PE staff, reception/admin, supporting the catering team, working with the librarian if your school has one, along with any other options you may have at your school.

A rotation of activities can be an option, it is always encouraged that students spend time in different areas of the establishment to increase their knowledge and experiences, this can be tailored to the students specific needs.

STAGGERED EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKPLACE

The concept of staggered Experience of the Workplace can be run with traditional Experience of the Workplace or in-house. The idea is to spread out the encounter over a period of time. This could be 1 - 3 hours per week for 6 weeks or a variation of what works best for the students, school, and employer.

The advantage of the staggered approach could help the students adjust in a more controlled environment and not become overwhelmed. This taster session style would still need to follow the normal protocol if it is with an external organisation.

VOCATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKPLACE

Some of your students may have placements through a vocational course. These placements can be utilised as Experience of the Workplace as long as they have enough interaction with employees and not just the course tutor, varied experience within the workplace and undertake tasks during their learning.

ENTERPRISE EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKPLACE

Enterprise challenges happen throughout the year groups, normally as part of a whole school activity. These activities are a great opportunity to involve Experience of the Workplace however, you may need a few extra milestones to count it as Experience of the Workplace. A clear learning outcome must be involved, interaction between students and an employee, this could be virtual, in-house or face to face but must be relevant to the enterprise challenge and have links to help the students understand of the industry. For example, if it is a gardening project the student should interact with a professional gardener, so they can ask questions about the industry and the job role as a gardener.

There is no time frame for enterprise challenges however it is important an overall outcome is met.

Giving students different tasks/roles to fulfil is a great idea of showing how a workplace would function for example, marketing, finance, design, project manager etc. Enterprise challenge is also a great way of hitting some of the other benchmarks like BM2, 3 and 4 as well as the obvious BM5 and 6.

There are varied Enterprise challenges that are successful. It is worth thinking about what resources you have within the school to access, your EA and EC will be able to support with connecting you to employers.

A nice touch for enterprise Experience of the Workplace could be to have the employer set the challenge at the start with the students, then speak with the students mid-way to share questions and see progress and then finish with prize or end of enterprise presentation.

VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKPLACE

Virtual work experience can have its place, connecting virtually with an employer opens many doors to opportunities that may have been limited previously due to location or insurance. Linking virtually with an employer may be helpful as the student can remain in a comfortable setting in school or at home. Tasks can be set from a distance and worked at the student's pace. Check in's and progression can be monitored by both school staff and the employer. Two-way conversations can happen through a virtual platform, chosen by the school to support the individual student's needs.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering may or may not already happen within the school, it may even be within another programme like NCS or D of E Award. you will need to ensure that students have set tasks, two way conversations with employers/ employees and have a varied idea of the industry or setting they are supporting.

It's important to keep an up to date log of these interactions, as they may take place over a longer period and not all in one block. They may, as mentioned also be with a third party agency or programmes, keeping a log with the organiser will enable you to keep track of skills gained and progress.

WORKPLACE VISIT (INCLUDING VIRTUAL)

A workplace visit may not always be the best way to achieve all of the required BM6 Benchmark outcomes, however a visit to the workplace is a great way to allow students a taste of what the world of work looks like.

These visits are wide ranging and could be a visit to a factory to see how they operate their production line or be as simple as a visit to the local fire station. All of these encounters are valuable. These visits can also be prerecorded or virtual, what ever works best for your students. It is so important with this kind of Experience of the Workplace that it is meaningful, that pre and post experience work is completed so the students get the most out of the activity.

Students always have the option to undertake these visits out of school hours and during school holidays if they can be arranged. Students participating in visits and trips within their own time can be counted as their Experience of the Workplace. Undertaking this type of activity in their own time could also be a nice way of encouraging a students parents / carers to be more involved in the process. Simply utilise home learning to captured the experience. For example, the student could take pictures or write down how many different careers they saw when they visited the zoo, or local attraction with their family. Pictures could be captured to show their careers experiences and learning, students could even design and make posters or story boards to show their findings. This is a great and cheaper way of gaining Experience of the Workplace. Again, make sure it is meaningful.





MAKE SURE IT IS MEANINGFUL

The above are all great options however, for the whole experience to be meaningful and beneficial to the students it is important that there is a clear objective and outcome for the students, there should also be pre and post experience work.

As mentioned pre work could be an activity like researching the industry, planning some questions to ask, or even creating a CV or partaking in a mock interview.

Post work can be covered in the next section follow up. These pre and post activities are probably naturally done by you or the teaching staff, just ensure they are captured and can be evidenced.

You might find this link to the 'Make It Meaningful' resources on the Careers and Enterprise Company useful. <https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/resources/making-it-meaningful>

EXPERIENCE OF THE WORKPLACE FOLLOW UP:

All Experiences of the Workplace must be followed up thoroughly with not only the student but also the employer.

The approach with the student can be varied. Gone are the days when a daily logbook was the only option. There are other ways to capture activity evidence. These can include post experience evaluation, student / employer reflection and feedback or by using online surveys. Feedback forms may feel like a simple way however, they may not be the most beneficial for the student. A simple recorded conversation can be the best way to find out the student's feelings, findings, and aspirations. Another way that has been successful is designing a poster of the industry, what the students found out, liked and disliked. It can then be shared with other students; this is also a way of sharing LMI information. Simple reflection tasks can also be a nice way of capturing the students thoughts about the experience. The student could write a letter to themselves of what they would like to learn from the experience before they go on it and at the end they could read it back to themselves and see if the outcome matched their wishes.

ALL THE ABOVE MUST COVER THE FOLLOWING 4 POINTS IF POSSIBLE:

- 1.** Learning outcomes are defined based on the age and specific needs of students
- 2.** The student meets a range of people from the workplace
- 3.** There is an extensive, two-way interaction between the student and the employee
- 4.** The student must perform a task or produce a piece of work relevant to that workplace and receive feedback on it from the employer

[Link to CEC The SEND Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit for further information and Experience of the Workplace case studies.](#)



**BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE
INSPIRING WORCESTERSHIRE CAREERS HUB
WWW.SKILLS4WORCESTERSHIRE.CO.UK**



 @INSPIRING_WORCS  INSPIRING_WORCS  INSPIRING WORCESTERSHIRE