



Employer Guide to Work Experience



Contents

- 1. What is work experience?**
- 2. Benefits to your business**
- 3. Types of work experience**
- 5. How to get started**
- 6. How to offer a placement**
- 8. Useful information on Link2+**
- 9. Health and safety visits**
- 10. Prior to work experience**
- 12. Ideas for student work**
- 14. Pre-placement**
- 15. First day of the placement**
- 16. Final day of the placement**
- 18. Work related learning**
- 20. Common misconceptions**
- 22. Useful websites for employers**
- 23. Contact YC Hertfordshire**

Work Experience – Shaping Your Future Workforce

Thousands of employers offer work experience through YC Hertfordshire each year and this 'Employer Guide to Work Experience' aims to help both those new to offering placements and to companies already involved. Many employers want to help, but are sometimes hesitant until they know more about it. This guide can support employers to take part in this rewarding activity. Employers can directly influence the learning journey of the next generation of employees helping them prepare and develop 'employability skills' and giving invaluable exposure to the world of work. By offering work experience, you are providing young people with a better chance of securing a future job and you can showcase your employment opportunities.

What is work experience?

Work experience is an unpaid placement with an employer which usually lasts one or two weeks in which a young person carries out tasks in a similar way as an employee, the emphasis being on learning from the experience and developing skills and confidence. It usually takes place whilst students are in education or shortly after leaving education.

Benefits to your business

- The student is an extra person who can help with real tasks – many young people are IT literate and capable of administration and project work or can assist with manual and practical activities.
- It upskills your employees by providing them with management, co-ordination and supervision experience through overseeing the student and their tasks. If you have an apprentice, they can take on this role showing the student routes into your sector.
- It is a recruitment tool for Traineeships, Apprenticeships, weekend and part-time staff.
- It helps young people to gain knowledge and skills in your industry that will perhaps encourage them into your line of work in the future.
- Students often bring new ideas and creativity with fresh perspectives which can help your business, including social media.
- It raises your company profile in the local community.
- Student feedback at the end of the placement on their thoughts and experience can be a useful exercise in improving the perception of your business and culture.

It is rewarding to feel that you have helped a young person experience real work which can raise aspirations, develop skills and clarify their careers ideas as well as giving them something to record on a CV.

Types of work experience

There are various types of work experience that employers can get involved with through YC Hertfordshire which include:

One or two week placements usually in Years 10/11 (Block Work Experience at aged 15/16) – schools go on placements throughout the academic year and a YC Hertfordshire representative can discuss dates with you.

One or two week placements for a specific young person (Bespoke Work Experience at aged 17/18) – usually in Years 12 or 13 and tailored to a student's interest or course they are studying.

A placement for one or two days per week (Extended Work Experience) – over a term or academic year where the student is released from school to work at your business. For an employer, this is an extra pair of hands on an ongoing basis.

Work Experience for Traineeships – This placement consists of 100 hours work experience over 8-10 weeks (usually one or two days per week) working towards a City & Guilds Qualification. The programme allows you to work with a young person as if they were a member of your staff, for free, giving you time to get to know them and grow their skills. It could save on recruitment costs too if they turned out to be the right employee for the company.

Work experience for special schools – follows the same format as mainstream schools and can be for one or two weeks or over an extended period. Employers tell us that the benefits of this type of work experience are:

- Many students with additional needs make positive contributions to business – as they may be eager to impress, are dedicated, methodical, adaptable, determined, tenacious, enthusiastic and like to feel part of a team.
- Students with additional needs give a new perspective and bring new ideas to the business.
- Having a student with additional needs demystifies some of the pre-conceived ideas about special needs conditions.
- Recruitment tool for Traineeships, Supported Internships, weekend and part-time staff.
- Raising the profile of students with additional needs and offering positive and equal opportunities for all.
- Increase motivation and job satisfaction for employees.
- Influencing and promoting commitment to employ disabled staff.

How to get started

YC Hertfordshire will contact you in person, by email or phone - you choose!

We have dedicated members of staff who work as the broker between employers and schools. Their knowledge of building employer engagement through work experience and work related learning delivery can help you every step of the way. They can:

- Help you to set up a job description by discussing tasks the student can get involved in.
- Talk through the calendar of dates when schools are going out on their work experience to fit your placement offer/offers around your business needs.
- Carry out free health and safety checks for the work experience role that will also benefit your business as a whole highlighting any new health and safety information and guidance.
- Be your contact, prior to, during and after the placement to answer any questions and give advice.

How to offer a placement

YC Hertfordshire will add your offer/s of work experience onto our online booking system (Link2+) for students to view.

Link2+ is a web based system where students can search placements by type and sector. This means that students who are interested in your type of industry are more likely to select your business. It is a fair system that gives everyone equal opportunity. Link2+ will only display the number of placements and schools you have agreed to.

Search

Please select one of the options below, or enter the job number

Job number

Go

OR search for all or part of an employer's name here:


Employer


Go


OR search on employer's postcode here:


Postcode


Go


 Administration, Business and Office Work


 Building and Construction


 Catering and Hospitality


 Computers and IT


 Design, Arts and Crafts


 Education and Training


 Engineering


 Environment, Plants and Animals


 Financial Services


 Healthcare


 Languages, Information and Culture


 Legal and Political Services


 Leisure, Sport and Tourism


 Manufacturing and Production


 Marketing and Advertising


 Media, Print and Publishing


 Performing Arts


 Personal and Other Services including hair and beauty


 Retail Sales and Customer Services

 Science, Mathematics and Statistics

 Security and Armed Forces

 Social Work and Counselling Services

 Transport and Logistics

 ALL All Categories

To restrict your search to a specific post code area, town or telephone code area, enter the details here and press submit before making your classification selection.

Postcode:

Town:

Telephone area code:

Submit

Link2+ is a closed website where employers have an individual pin to log in and view job descriptions and the school/s which have booked placements. Due to data protection, student names are withheld.

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You are logged in as **Administrator** [Help](#) [Log Out](#)

[Home](#) [Statistics/Reports](#) [Utilities/Setup](#) [Preferences](#)

Welcome

Welcome to Link2.

This site allows you to review work experience placements.

Select who you are from the list below to log in to the site:

- [Employer](#)
- [Member of school staff](#)
- [Student](#)

Once you are logged in, you will see which schools have booked a student/s to undertake their work experience at your company.

Placement Opportunities

Job No.	Placement Address	Placement Town	Job Title	Offers	Booked	Help
						Details
56656	Farnham House	Stevenage	Administration Assistant	10	0	View
58698	Farnham House	Stevenage	Administration Assistant	0	0	View
114549	Farnham House	Stevenage	Administration Assistant Post 16	0	0	View

Useful information on Link2+

The online system has useful information to support employers including an employer checklist, health & safety made simple section and ideas for student induction.

The screenshot displays the Link2+ online system interface. At the top, a blue header bar contains the YC Hertfordshire logo on the left, the user login information "You are logged in as John Lewis" in the center, and an "Admin Menu" on the right. Below the header, a navigation bar lists several menu items: Home, Company Details, Placement Opportunities, Health & Safety, Emergency Procedures, Contact Us, and Work Experience Literature. The main content area is titled "Work Experience Literature" and includes a sub-header stating "The documents below may be read online, downloaded and/or printed :". Below this, a list of documents is provided, including "Link2+ - A Guide for Employers", "Work Experience Letter of Understanding", "Child Protection Guidance for Placement Providers", "Block WEX Checklist Guidance", "Help to Shape your Future Workforce - Activity Mindmap", "Employer Feedback Form", "Accident Incident Notification Form", "Fire Safety Risk Assessment Checklist - HSE", "Fire Extinguisher Service & Inspection - FAQs", "Health & Safety Made Simple", "Young People and Work Experience - Guide for Employers", and "Student Induction Checklist". At the bottom of the page, a footer bar contains contact information for YC Hertfordshire, including the address "Farnham House, Six Hills Way, Stevenage, SG1 2FQ", the phone number "01438 843705", the email "workrelatedlearning@hertfordshire.gov.uk", and the website "www.youthconnexions.org". Below the footer bar, a copyright notice "© 2012-2017 Veryan Software Limited" and a cookie policy statement are visible.

You are logged in as **John Lewis** Admin Menu

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Home Company Details Placement Opportunities Health & Safety Emergency Procedures Contact Us Work Experience Literature

Work Experience Literature

The documents below may be read online, downloaded and/or printed :

- [Link2+ - A Guide for Employers](#)
- [Work Experience Letter of Understanding](#)
- [Child Protection Guidance for Placement Providers](#)
- [Block WEX Checklist Guidance](#)
- [Help to Shape your Future Workforce - Activity Mindmap](#)
- [Employer Feedback Form](#)
- [Accident Incident Notification Form](#)
- [Fire Safety Risk Assessment Checklist - HSE](#)
- [Fire Extinguisher Service & Inspection - FAQs](#)
- [Health & Safety Made Simple](#)
- [Young People and Work Experience - Guide for Employers](#)
- [Student Induction Checklist](#)

YC Hertfordshire, Farnham House, Six Hills Way, Stevenage, SG1 2FQ
01438 843705 workrelatedlearning@hertfordshire.gov.uk www.youthconnexions.org

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Health and safety visits

YC Hertfordshire carries out health and safety visits with IOSH qualified staff at employers who offer work experience placements to check that the environment appears safe for young people. These last on average 45 minutes, are free and most companies already have the necessary measures in place so there is nothing to be concerned about. It's a good opportunity to go through the job description and ask any questions you might have about the placement.

The health and safety visit is made up of three elements:

1. Documentation check of your health and safety policy and risk assessments.
2. To provide guidance on the type of work a student can undertake.
3. Look at/observe the working area including fire extinguishers/fire exits and the facilities that you have for employees.

Companies are visited at interim periods depending on their risk band. Low Risk – every five years, Medium Risk – every three years and High Risk - every year. Be assured therefore that once you have been visited, you may not need to do this again for up to five years. Employers with fewer than five employees are not expected to have a written health and safety policy and written risk assessments.

Prior to work experience

Here are some things to be aware of and also tips on what you can do in advance of the placements:

- A YC Hertfordshire member of staff will be in touch to arrange a health and safety visit at your company if necessary.
- The school will email or send you an 'Employer Agreement' form to sign and return before the placement takes place.
- Before the placement starts, let staff know the company has a student coming on work experience and ask them for ideas of things the student could do.
- Find out if anyone is interested in supervising the student – this could be an apprentice if appropriate.
- Put a timetable together for the week of who the student will be working with and when (include lunch breaks and breaks through the day). See example on the next page.
- The student should call to arrange a pre-placement Interview/chat.
- Inform reception there is a student coming and arrange for a visitors badge if required.
- Write a list of what the student will need on the placement; remember to include any of the following if necessary: protective clothing, tools, equipment, computer login, security passes and somewhere to put their personal belongings.

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Work Experience Student Timetable

Student/School Name: _____ Dates: from to

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09.00am-11.00am	Greeting, Health & Safety induction, tour of the building and emergency procedures	Social Media Activity (research company presence online)	Work Related Learning in schools Activity	Assisting with administration tasks from the team	Product & Services Project (Activity to be overseen by Apprentice)
11.00am - 11.20am	Tea break	Tea break	Tea break	Tea break	Tea break
11.20am-12.30pm	Meeting the team (people the student will be working with for the week)	(continuation) Social Media Activity	(continuation) Work Related Learning in schools Activity	(continuation) Assisting with administration tasks from the team	(continuation) Product & Services Project
12.30pm-1.30pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1.30pm 4.00pm	Student to Interview staff individually about their role/what they do at the business	Information Leaflets & Website Activity	Health & Safety Visits with the Employment & Skills Co-ordinator	Work Experience diary design	Product & Services Project
4.00pm - 4.30pm	Work experience diary entry	Work experience diary entry	Work experience diary entry	Work experience diary entry	Complete diary/ student reflection and Exit Interview

Ideas for student work

As an employer, it can be difficult to know what to give a student to do who is on work experience. If however you prepare some tasks in advance, it will help you to have ready-made activities and takes the stress away from putting things together at the last minute. It is always positive for a student to be involved in varied tasks and to feel a sense of achievement at the end of the week. Here are some ideas of activities you can give to students at your company:

Task 1 – Interview the staff

The student chooses members of staff to interview about their roles/how they got into the industry and what they enjoy about their jobs.

Task 2 – Let the student experience being an employee

To give the student an understanding of the day-to-day goings on of your business you can invite them to meetings that take place and encourage them to take notes. Let them observe customer service scenarios on the phone or in person. Let them meet and greet visitors.

Task 3 – A Project

Set the student a project that gives them something to focus on and help them understand how the company fits in with the wider world and what the different parts of your business encompass. They could think up an advertising campaign and design online posters/flyers/leaflets detailing any product that you sell or create a new product for your business.

Task 4 – Social Media

Most students are knowledgeable with social media – you can give them a task to look at how your company uses the internet to hit target audiences and they can then identify what could be improved and other sites you might not have considered. This may well broaden your customer base as young people are usually aware of all the latest ways of promotion and communication.

Task 5 – Administration

Young people are increasingly IT literate. Do you have any data entry the company has not had time to type up? Could the student type up notes from a meeting? Could they help put a spreadsheet together with information the team need? Could they update contact sheets? Is there some web research they can get involved in?

Task 6 – Practical Support

If the work is practical, the student could undertake or prepare simple tasks with supervision including clearing work areas, tidying cupboards, taking a stock check and general manual support. Check with our members of staff about the tasks a student can help with practically as they really can be an extra pair of hands.

Each student has different levels of ability so it is useful to have a few ideas to adapt your timetable accordingly.

Pre-placement

The student will give you a call to arrange the pre-placement interview/chat. You could use this interview to find out what the student would like to do on their placement, explain what the tasks are likely to be and to reassure them. It is also good for the young person to experience a 'mock interview' scenario for when they go out into the real job market.

Sample Questions

- Ask the student what their expectations are and what they hope to learn.
- Ask what subjects they enjoy at school.
- Ask them if they would like you to go over the job description for any clarification.
- Ask if they have any questions about the placement.
- Ask if they know what they want to do as a future job.

It is a good idea to look over the job description with them and ask if there is anything they are unsure about and discuss start/finish times and dress code. You can also let them know who their supervisor will be and introduce them to the young person if available.

First day of the placement

- Introduce the student to your colleagues so that they feel welcome.
- Show them where they will be working and include a health and safety induction identifying fire exits, meeting point, toilets and kitchen facilities.
- Explain the organisation and what it does so that the student understands what they are going to do and why.
- Run through their timetable and who they will be working with and discuss lunch and breaks.
- Ask if they have brought their work experience diary – this is something an employer can input into and means the student has a record of their time with you.
- A teacher might call today or further into the week to arrange to come and meet the student and see how they are getting on and ask you how the student is doing.
- At the end of the day, ask the student how they got on and alleviate any concerns they might have so that the next day the student can come into the workplace more self-assured.

Final day of the placement

- The student might have been working on a project during the week – this is a chance for them to present what they have done.
- Arrange to see the student so that they can reflect on their experience and feedback on the company culture and organisation as a whole. Ask the student what they enjoyed/ didn't enjoy and what they feel they have learnt.
- Complete the 'Employer Comments' page of the work experience diary.
- Please fill out our feedback form on your experience which we will provide you with (see example on next page) – we value and welcome your comments to make sure we are providing the best service that we can.

Work Experience Employer Comments

We would like to know about your recent YC Hertfordshire work experience placement.

Your comments will help us ensure that we provide the best service in the future.

Company Name: Postcode:

Contact Name: Date:

Contact Position:

Contact Number:

Email Address:

	Feedback On YC Hertfordshire	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
1.	Response to your queries and customer service				
2.	If you used the Link2+ database, it was useful and easy to use				
3.	Quality of the information provided by YC Hertfordshire staff at the H&S visit				
4.	Overall service provided				
5.	Additional Comments:				

	Feedback On Learning Provider	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
6.	Timely and professional communication prior to & during the placement				
7.	Availability of support from learning providers/teachers/tutors in the event of a problem				
8.	Additional Comments:				

Work related learning

Through work related learning, employers can support education by inspiring young people about the future and attract potential employees. YC Hertfordshire works to facilitate these partnerships and co-ordinate school activity. If you would like to get involved in any of the following ways, we can support you with the process and inform you of local events taking place:

- **Careers Fairs** – Employers are able to showcase their business by having a stand at this event sharing the workings of their company, highlighting entry routes and roles within the organisation. Year groups are from Year 9 (age 13 upwards).
- **Careers Carousels** – Employers from a variety of sectors introduce students to the skills required within your industry or profession in a speed networking format to any year group from Year 9 upwards. Students have short timed sessions with employers where they will ask questions about job roles and progression routes into your industry.
- **Mock Interviews** – Employers are invited into a school to interview students on a one to one basis preferably for a position that is a 'real job' within your company. Employers are encouraged to feedback on the young person's performance, dress code and language so they can take this constructive criticism forwards when being interviewed for a real job.
- **Site Visits** – A group of students in any year group can come and visit your workplace. This is a great way to showcase what you do as an employer and the various roles and responsibilities within your organisation. Students get the chance to tour your workplace and hear from different members of staff.

- **Employer Talks** – Presenting to a group of students in school about your role and organisation is a great way to discuss your sector in more depth. It gives the students a chance to hear from a professional and gain an invaluable insight into the workings of your business and entry routes. Employers usually deliver a presentation for 30 minutes followed by a question and answer session where students can interact with employers.
- **Continuing Professional Development Placements for Teachers' (CPD's)** – These programmes give teaching staff the opportunity to visit and spend time with a local business, at their premises. The focus is on showcasing their industry, training opportunities and selection criteria. It also gives the teachers ideas for lesson plans, labour market information and a chance to network and share best practice.
- **Rocket Into The Future** – YC Hertfordshire delivers space-themed careers and work-related learning programmes in primary schools. One element of the programme is called 'Shooting Stars' where an employer visits the school to inform students about the real working world, their business and the job that they do.

Careers and Enterprise Company – is a government funded national employer led organisation offering the following initiatives:

- **Enterprise Advisers** – YC Hertfordshire is working with the LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) to facilitate the engagement of employers with schools and colleges. Individual business volunteers in companies can become 'Enterprise Advisers', working closely with a local school or college at a strategic level to develop a careers plan that puts opportunities with local employers at the heart of a young person's education.
- **Employer Mentors** – Employees from any business can also become 'Mentors' working one-on-one to inspire students in school (aged 12 – 15 who are at risk of disengaging from education). This may include students who are underachieving, students who lack focus and direction and also those who have limited motivation and aspirations.

Common misconceptions

- **There is too much paperwork** – this is not the case, the only thing an employer needs to fill out is an 'Employer Agreement' form to email or send back to the school.
- **It is time consuming offering work experience** – with simple planning and preparation this can be minimised. Sharing the responsibility with work colleagues will alleviate the responsibility falling on one person and allowing an employee/apprentice to manage the student can upskill staff.
- **Under 16's cannot do work experience in certain sectors** – This is incorrect. Health and safety visits are carried out and job roles are risk banded accordingly. Many students work in sectors such as construction, catering and motor mechanics.
- **Employees must be DBS checked** – this is a process that checks the criminal backgrounds of staff for longer placements but this is not needed for placements under 15 days - so employers do not need this for one or two week work experience.
- **The company would need to get additional insurance to cover the student** – employers will usually have the necessary ELI and PLI Insurance already in place for their employees so no additional insurance is necessary.

- **Work experience students won't be able to do anything due to 'Health & Safety'** – students can carry out most tasks within a workplace unless deemed unsafe or jobs that only professionals can do. YC Hertfordshire can help you identify the wide variety of tasks young people can get involved with.
- **The Health & Safety aspect is too much hassle** – it is only a 45 minute visit with simple questions, no paperwork and most employers already have the necessary measures in place for their own employees.
- **It is hard to know what to do with students** – if you follow the steps prior to work experience by asking staff what work they might have for the student or give them real practical tasks – there is a lot the young person can help with.

Useful websites for employers

www.hse.gov.uk – Health & Safety Executive.

www.youthconnexions-hertfordshire.org/careers/employers – Information on how employers can engage in education from the YC Hertfordshire website **www.youthconnexions.org**

www.hertsgrowthhub.com – The Hertfordshire Growth Hub is a service for established businesses, helping them to find the highest quality locally-sourced support and expertise to help them achieve their business ambitions.

www.iosh.co.uk – Institute of Occupational Safety & Health.

www.hertfordshirelep.com – Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership is one of 39 LEPs across the country tasked by the Government to drive forward sustainable private sector growth and job creation.

www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/enterprise-advisers – Enterprise Advisers are volunteers who will work directly with the leadership of individual schools and colleges as part of the Careers and Enterprise Programme. These volunteers, drawn from business and other employers, large and small, will help to develop effective employer engagement plans.

www.inspiringthefuture.org – A free service across England which helps employers to engage with state secondary schools and colleges.

www.stemnet.org.uk/contact – STEMNET (the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Network) operates across the UK to create links between employers and educators that tackle STEM skills shortages.

Contact YC Hertfordshire

For any enquiries regarding work experience or work related learning please call: 01438 844766 or email: **workrelatedlearning@hertfordshire.gov.uk**

Alternatively, you can fill in our 'Employer Contact Form' and we will be in touch:
www.youthconnexions-hertfordshire.org/careers/employers/employer-contact-form/





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