Learning Resource 8: Introduction to Work Placement Standard
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Purpose
This is a learning resource which provides support to develop practice related to the Work Placement Standard. This resource, ‘Introduction to Work Placement Standard’, will help you to develop a shared language and understanding of the role that we play in providing meaningful engagement with the world of work.

Learning outcomes
As a result of engaging with this learning resource you will have:
- an understanding of what is meant by the term Work Placement
- the opportunity to reflect on your current practice
- knowledge about where to access support and information
- an understanding of the connections between career education and the Work Placement Standard.

Who is this learning for?
This resource has been developed to contribute to professional learning for practitioners at all levels. This incorporates those working with children and young people in the any context and in any sector.

The learning resource relates directly to the following expectations¹:
Teachers/Practitioners will:
- engage children and young people in meaningful discussion about their skills development and assist them in linking a work placement to their career journeys;
- encourage diverse thinking in children and young people to consider a broader view of subject choices, career options and work placement opportunities;
- facilitate young people’s learning and their ability to engage with a rapidly developing landscape of work/career and learning opportunities;
- make use of relevant digital and online resources.
What is the Work Placement Standard?

Workplace standard was a recommendation in Education Working for All, Commission for Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce Final Report, 2014. The report stated that a modern standard should be established for the acceptable content and quality of work experience, and guidelines should be made available to employers. This should be developed by Education Scotland in partnership with employer bodies and Skills Development Scotland. This should involve input from young people. Work experience should feature in the Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool and in Education Scotland school inspections.

This is a suite of three documents:

Career Education Standard (3-18)
Work Placements Standard
Guidance on School/Employer Partnerships

These should be seen as clarifying expectations and providing helpful support and guidance. The standard is built on the comprehensive advice and guidance presented in Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) and throughout the Building the Curriculum series.

There is a particularly strong association with key messages contained in Building the Curriculum 4: skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. Work placement standard set out the following as a recommendation for work placements.

Consider

With a view to the recommendation above, would you consider the current practice in your establishment as already meeting the standard?

Discuss the postives and negatives of your current practice.

Record your reflections or actions
What should the young person experience?

Young people will experience the world of work through a range of activities throughout their broad general education leading to a more focused experience of work in the senior phase in the form of work placements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simulated Work Environments</th>
<th>Enterprise Projects and Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview Preparation</td>
<td>Career Insight and Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer Visits</td>
<td>Site Visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspiration Visits</td>
<td>Work Placement Activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consider

Which options are available within your school?

Which year groups have access to the above work-based learning activities?

How could you incorporate work-based learning into your curricular area?
Work placement options

There are different options being used in establishments:

- **WORK INSPIRATION VISIT**
  Inspiration days that offer an insight to the sector

- **BLOCK PLACEMENT**
  Traditional model for work placement.

- **EXTENDED PLACEMENT**
  Takes place over the school year could be built into the timetable

- **FLEXIBLE PLACEMENT**
  Opportunity offered by an employer to a specific pupil out with their schools allocated work placement week

- **BESPOKE PLACEMENT**
  Agreement the business and the pupil to suit all needs. This could be during the school term or in the holidays.

**Consider**

Discuss how three of the above options could work within your establishment?

How do these options work with the existing school timetable?

**Record your reflections or actions**
What are benefits of a work placement?

Reflecting on the points above:

Consider

Discuss how we can encourage young people to engage in a work placement using the skills listed above?

How could we introduce the skills of the work placement in the classroom?

Can you think of other skills that young people would learn during a work placement?

Record your reflections or actions
What are the strengths of work placements?

- Experience the world of work
- Employer engagement
- Pupil engagement
- Focus on career pathway

Consider
Looking at the list above, discuss the strengths and how they are/could be used in your establishment to encourage a whole school approach to work placements.

Design a poster to showcase the strengths of a work placement.

Record your reflections or actions
What are the potential challenges?

Work placements have a number of key challenges:

- Timetabling
- Teacher remits
- Health & safety
- Parental engagement
- Self-found placements

Consider

Discuss the challenges and how they are/could be affecting work placements in your establishment.

How could you overcome the potential barriers?

Could this be a whole-school approach and what steps could be taken to involve all staff in the process?

Record your reflections or actions
Work placement expectations

The standard sets out the expectations for the main parties involved in work placements namely the young person, the employer, the parent/carer, the school and local authority, outlining the expectations in advance of, during and after a placement.

The standard aims to raise the quality of the learning that a work placement can offer and to motivate and inspire all those involved.

Consider

Discuss the expectations and how do you ensure that the expectations are met.

Think about three work placement opportunities that are currently available in your establishment and discuss if they meet the criteria in the diagram above.

Record your reflections or actions
Equalities

It will be the responsibility of all partners to address the issue of equality. While this standard is expressed as a universal entitlement for young people to gain experience of work, it needs to be clear that not all young people enjoy the same advantages, nor face the same challenges. Their backgrounds and circumstances must never limit their potential and all partners will seek to develop practice which ensures improved outcomes for all young people.

All stakeholders involved in any work placement should provide advice, guidance and opportunities that contribute to:

- eradicating discrimination
- promoting mutual respect and equality of opportunity across genders
- promoting mutual respect and equality of opportunity across social background, disabilities, ethnicities, sexual orientation and religions

Consider

How do I ensure that work placements are available to, based on their chosen career pathway?

How does the school/establishment and partners actively challenge labour market preconceptions?

How can we ensure that children and young people with additional support needs are given the support to enable them to make informed decisions about their career pathway?

Who do we need to work with to ensure that work placements are available to all?

Record your reflections
Accreditation and Awards

Every school can deliver a range of skills for work related courses which may include opportunities such as:

Foundation Apprenticeships
Enterprise & Employability
Leadership Award
Work Placement Awards

These qualifications enable young people to develop workplace skills which allow them to be work ready upon leaving school and maintain gainful employment.

Consider

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award</th>
<th>SCQF Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NPA Enterprise and Employability</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPA Leadership</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate of Work Readiness</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Development</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills for Work Courses</td>
<td>4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Placement</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Apprenticeships</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Achievement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which of the work-based qualifications are currently available in your establishment?

How does the school/establishment and partners work together to provide work-based learning qualifications?

How can we ensure that children and young people with additional support needs are given the support to enable them to make informed decisions about their career pathway?

Record your reflections
SQA Work Placement Qualifications

Work placement units have now fully replaced the previous SQA Work Experience units. Below is a brief summary of the different levels:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCQF level</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The learner will work with</td>
<td>support, the teacher/lecturer will offer advice</td>
<td>minimum support, the teacher/lecturer will respond to specific questions from the learner</td>
<td>non-directive supervision, learners will take responsibility for their own learning but the teacher/lecturer may explain and interpret if requested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The learner will contribute to, offer some ideas and/or suggestions</td>
<td>negotiate, put forward suggestions and ideas and agree a way forward</td>
<td>take some supervisory responsibility, take the lead in some aspects of the work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targets, plans and activities will be straightforward, consisting of routine elements</td>
<td>detailed, consisting of some routine and non-routine elements</td>
<td>complex, consisting of some non-routine elements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consider

Write an action plan that will ensure that all young people have the opportunity to participate in a work placement qualification. Consider the following:

How do you decide the relevant level?
What resources would be required?
What is the potential timeframe?

Record your reflections
**Profiling**

Recognising achievement, profiling and reporting are integral elements of Curriculum for Excellence (Building the Curriculum 5). Children and young people should have frequent and regular opportunities to discuss and review their learning, and plan next steps with those involved in their education, this continuous process from 3-18, is known as **profiling**.

**Consider**

How can we ensure that children and young people are using of profiling to record their involvement in work-based learning?

How well do the children and young people recognise the importance of linking profiling to their learner journey?

How can we support learners to understand how their experience of work-based learning helps them to develop skills for learning, life and work?

How can we connect with colleagues, parents and partners to encourage children and young people to engage with profiling?

**Record your reflections**
Next Steps: Design Thinking and Collaboration

Journey Mapping

A journey map allows for a user’s experience of a service to be visually mapped out over time. It helps to understand the individual steps a user takes when interacting with a service, the channels they access it by (online, face to face, etc.) and their satisfaction levels at different points.

How does it work?

A journey map breaks down each journey into five simple steps allowing insights into when someone becomes aware of a service, how they join that service, how they use it, how they develop it and how that journey ends and the user leaves the service.

Using a journey map

We can use a journey map to:

- Record an interview of how someone experienced an existing service
- Show how services currently work - uncovering pain points and opportunities
- Visualise a new service
Discuss the journey map below and how this compares to the process in your own establishment.

How does the young person feel at each stage of the process?

How does this process equate to the real world? Would this help a young person be better prepared for the application process?

Complete a journey map in your teams
**Personas**

Personas are fictitious characters created to represent different groups of people based on the views and experiences of the group. Personas are developed to represent young people and help practitioners to see how these young people will interact with their service.

Personas encourage people to focus on the needs of the persona, rather than revert to their own personal opinions/biases. Personas provide an anonymous but believable character to focus on and design your service around.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>What are their Interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
<td>What is important to them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background:</td>
<td>What causes them major worries?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Consider**

Discuss the persona template above and start to think about the variety of young people that you work with.

What are the potential barriers they have to overcome?
How do they currently use your service?
Looking at your journey map, does this limit participation?

**Complete a Persona and post in the relevant work space**
Tomorrow’s News

Tomorrow’s News is a way of imagining what stories you would like to be reported about the outcomes of your co-design process. It helps to create a convincing story around the positive outcomes of the process. This can help people to see the overall picture and the benefits of a successful outcome.

You create a news story from a chosen time in the future, focusing on the positive effects of the co-design process on:

Young people  
Practitioners  
Senior Leadership Team  
Partners  
Parents/Carers

It should be written in a journalistic style, with a snappy tagline, it is good to include a quote from an interested party. The language should be simple and free of jargon, the story explains:

The problem  
The changes  
People’s feelings about the new process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Tomorrow’s News</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Consider

Think about how you would view success at an agreed time in the future, discuss:

What success would look like?  
How will you gauge success?  
Who would you want to hear a quote from?

Complete Tomorrow’s News and post in the relevant work space