



Norfolk County Council



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Factsheet 2

Setting up a Work Experience Programme - Overview

2. Setting up a Work Experience Programme

A high-quality programme requires:

- Early planning (ideally 6 months ahead)
- Clear project planning, timeline, staffing and monitoring
- Encouraging students to self-source placements where appropriate
- Support for students with SEND or additional needs, who may require bespoke or extended placements. Please see details of our bespoke offer for academic year 26/27.
- Strong communication with employers and parent/carer(s)

Top tips:

- Timing is crucial! If planning to work with a brokerage service to support your programme, discuss timings with them in advance so they can achieve the best outcomes for your students in sourcing placements and/or completing health and safety checks in a timely manner
- Avoiding the later summer term can be advantageous as there may be less competition for placements – and try to avoid choosing the same dates as other schools in your area!
- Some employers have seasonal fluctuations meaning the summer period is busier and staff are more stretched. They may also have more staff on annual leave during the peak summer period
- There may be better opportunities at other times of the year – especially with employers who can only take one student at a time. Placements can be better quality with potentially a wider variety of tasks on offer and more staff able to get involved
- Employers may be more receptive to taking a student if they are not inundated with requests at the same time every year
- Accept that employers have requests from other schools & colleges for WEX, T level placements, supporting DWP & other projects that support vulnerable young people & adults so may not be able to act on your request. It may be worth asking these employers when the best time might be to contact them in future years – it may help to get in early!

The Careers and Enterprise Company guidance, going forward, states that a modern work experience programme should:

- Prioritise young people who are missing out and provide targeted support
- Start early, allowing access to multiple, different industries & occupations
- Include experiences that are employer-led in their design
- Be underpinned by learning outcomes, to ensure a progressive high-quality approach
- Enable meaningful relationships between the employer and young person
- Offer meaningful experiences as defined in updated [Gatsby Benchmark 6](#)

Full details and supporting resources can be found on the CEC's website:

[Modern Work Experience | The Careers and Enterprise Company](#)



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