

equalex

THE CAREERS &
ENTERPRISE
COMPANY



Modern work experience – FAQs

June 2025

This document will be regularly reviewed and updated.

What is the work experience guarantee?

It is a government ambition for every young person to have access to two weeks' worth of work experience. It is not yet policy, the policy is under development and the Department for Education (DfE) will share future timelines and expectations in the future.

Where do The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) fit in?

CEC are the government's partner in delivering their ambition for work experience and are piloting a range of approaches and models supported by Careers Hubs and five Multi Academy Trusts. Learnings from pilot activities will be shared to support Careers Hubs, Education Leaders and Careers Leaders to develop their future offers. Careers Hubs are developing their approaches to ready the system for the new guarantee. Insights from these activities and pilots are being shared with the DfE.

Where can we find out more about the work experience guarantee?

The new [statutory guidance for schools, published 8th May 2025](#) sets out the future policy direction of travel. It shares some early detail into the intent of the future policy. More detail will follow as the policy develops more fully, and longer-term implementation timelines are shared. You can also find out more about the equalities high quality learning outcomes framework and approaches by visiting [Modern Work Experience | The Careers and Enterprise Company](#)

This feels a lot, where do we start?

As outlined in the statutory guidance, the starting point for this work is the implementation of Benchmark 6, as outlined in the updated Gatsby Benchmarks. Approaching the development of your careers programme through a lens of quality will help you and your school leaders look forward. It is important to remember this is not yet a fully developed policy, so you have some lead time to strategically plan for your context, setting and most importantly learners.

What support will be available to help us?

Careers Hubs will be your local go to for support to plan for the future ambition of all learners having access to the modern work experience. However, as the national body for careers education, CEC will be sharing a range of on-going communications, guidance, CPD opportunities and inspirational case studies to help. These will be shared via Careers Hubs but also through the [The Careers & Enterprise Academy](#), Excellence Seminars and communities of improvement so make sure you are signed up! Support will continuously evolve and develop and will be available to Careers Hubs, Schools, Education Leaders, Careers Leaders, Employers and Careers Delivery Providers. Employers should also visit the [Employer Standards](#) for further bespoke guidance and tools. The ["How to"](#) guide on the CEC Resource Directory is a good place to start!

We have so many questions, but not all the answers...

Rest assured that there are no answers to all the operational details at the moment. It is important to remember that this is a new and developing piece of work and the pilots are surfacing great practice, system wide challenges, solutions, opportunities and insight.

The best focus for your attention is:

- Implementation of the updated [Gatsby Benchmarks](#) to ensure continuous improvement of careers provision for all of your learners
- Use the [Careers Impact internal leadership review](#)
- Consider which of your learners are missing out on work experience and why, and think about how your school will approach bridging gaps and enabling equity of access to workplaces
- Map your current provision to the equalities [learning outcomes framework](#). In all of the pilots, careers and curriculum leaders have been surprised to see where the opportunities already exist within your school to access workplaces
- If your current programme of activity already supports the delivery of quality experiences underpinned by learning outcomes then you may just need to tweak the offer (unless its helpful for you to be transformative!)

Does this mean we can't do traditional work experience placements anymore?

Workplace experiences happen in many forms; traditional work experience placements are one approach which work well for many schools and many learners. The work experience guarantee as laid out in the statutory guidance is entirely flexible. It is up to you as a school to decide how you support your learners to access 10 days' worth of work experience. CEC, with Multi Academy Trust partners, is trialling ten models across all types of institutions. If you currently have a successful one-week traditional model, we encourage you to underpin it with clear learning outcomes to maximise impact for all learners. Additionally, consider how your program can expand beyond this model to support the KS3 commitment and accommodate learners who may miss out on a traditional model for various reasons. We will share information about emerging models and pilot activities in the autumn.

Will this guarantee be funded?

There is no information to share about this currently. The government are working towards a spending review and as the policy is not yet fully tested or developed, insight is informing future decision making.

What about health and safety guidance and safeguarding? Will there be anything new?

The statutory guidance points to the Keeping Children Safe in Education and to Health and Safety Executive Guidance. Stakeholders will be updated if/when changes are made. It is useful to consider when planning your future programmes for the work experience guarantee, that not all models of workplace experiences and "placements" would require the same approach as a 1:1 placement. Work is underway to support employers and schools with streamlining processes and supporting efficient solutions. DfE are also working closely with a range of stakeholders to understand and remove barriers caused by the administrative burden of traditional work experience for schools and employers.

How is the employer pipeline of all the extra experiences being supported?

Careers Hubs are working hard to “ready the system”, advanced Careers Hub pilots are testing employer support and engagement. Employers are responding positively to the opportunity for flexible approaches to delivering workplace experiences. They feedback that they are keen to see behaviour change from schools in the development of modernised delivery models and keen to understand the needs of schools, their programmes and learners to develop great experiences that are ultimately responsive to the needs of their businesses. Careers Hubs will play a critical role in supporting employers and schools to ensure workplace experiences are also responsive to local LMI, local growth sectors and skills needs.

What will count as a workplace experience towards the 10-day guarantee?

Actual workplace experiences will need to meet the BM6 definition of meaningful as outlined by Gatsby in their updated Benchmark Report. There will be many other factors included in your overall careers programme which will contribute to effective preparation and planning for workplace experiences, and they all have rightful value. CEC have published a [guide](#) to building meaningful experiences into progressive careers programmes.

The CEC designed equalex framework offers a programme that underpins meaningful work experiences and offers the opportunity to ensure young people develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to be able to access meaningful work experiences.

How can equalex help me to begin planning for the future?

The equalex framework has been designed by CEC to support the development of a quality programme of modern work experience which is progressive in nature and underpinned by [learning outcomes](#) which maximise impact for all learners. The framework is currently being tested across a number of pilots which include schools, special schools, employers, Careers Hubs and work experience providers. We look forward to sharing more detail about equalex and are currently gathering insight from these pilots to inform future developments. You can access the learning outcomes framework here [Modern Work Experience | The Careers and Enterprise Company](#) which may be helpful to consider in your early planning and strategic conversations regarding modern work experience.

Are there any changes or a work experience guarantee for post-16 learners?

The work experience guarantee ambition is for pre-16 learners. Post 16 institutions should focus on Benchmark 6 and refer to requirements outlined in the [16-19 study programme](#) guidance.

Are employers expected to map all activities against the equalex learning outcomes?

Learning outcomes are for young people to work towards and reflect on. Employers may help the process by simply identifying where their activities would sit on the [tiered equalex pyramid](#). When a school/Hub are supporting employers to develop workplace experiences they should be clear to employers what the purpose of the workplace experience is, this conversation would be sensibly driven by the learning outcomes.

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