Modern work experience.
Let's make it work.

THE CAREERS & ENTERPRISE COMPANY | UK Government

National Mission on Work Experience Pledge:

Frequently Asked Questions for Employers

About the pledge

1.What is the National Mission on Work Experience?

The Government has launched a National Mission on Work Experience, working alongside The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) and its regional partners, to boost opportunities outside the classroom.

CEC is supporting this call to arms to employers to provide an additional 200,000 work experience opportunities and ensure all young people aged 14-16 have vital exposure to the workplace, with Careers Hubs, Mayors and local authorities forging links between schools and employers.

2. Why should I offer modern work experience?

For employers, modern work experience is about more than giving back. It's about investing in your future workforce, strengthening local talent pipelines, and showcasing your sector to the next generation. It raises your profile, delivers social value in the community and builds pride across your existing teams - a sense of purpose that's proven to boost motivation and retention. With flexible ways to get involved, from just a few hours to a week, CEC can support you to find the right model for you. By pledging to support the National Mission on Work Experience, you are helping us to plug the gap in current provision and ensuring that all young people have access to high-quality modern work experience.

3. What are we committing to by pledging?

Pledging to support the National Mission on Work Experience is an opportunity for employers to state an ambitious intention to create work experience opportunities for young people aged 14–16. It is intended to demonstrate leadership and build momentum towards the government's ambition for high-quality modern work experience at scale.

Pledging represents a meaningful commitment to work towards the stated number of opportunities, during the current academic year. The pledge should be ambitious but realistic. Employers are not expected to have every delivery detail in place before pledging; CEC will work with participating employers to identify potential routes to delivery and to develop an achievable plan. There is more information regarding the support CEC can provide in question 10 below.

4. What is modern work experience?

The Government has set out its ambition for work experience, and all schools should be reforming their work experience programmes providing a minimum of two weeks' worth of work experience by Year 11 (during Key Stages 3 and 4), made up of:

At least one week of work experience activities in Years 7–9

At least one week of placements in Years 10–11

This ambition will ensure access for all young people, enabling flexibility for schools, learners, and employers to design experiences that meet local and individual needs. Modern work experience encourages a series of flexible workplace opportunities that develop skills, knowledge, and confidence for future careers. Work experience opportunities could range from group workplace visits to individual extended industry placements. More information about what makes these opportunities meaningful in question 11.

5. Who should the work experience opportunities be for?

The pledge is specifically focused on providing modern work experience for young people aged 14–16, in a range of settings, including Mainstream, Specialist and Alternative Provision. The opportunities pledged should contribute towards the week of placements in Years 10-11 outlined above.

6. Will our pledge be made public?

The work experience opportunities you pledge will be published online on the National Work Experience Mission Tracker, showing where in the country they will be available. This is supported by the Prime Minister and his Government and as a National Mission there will be moments to celebrate progress and recognise the commitment of employers and sectors who have stepped up.

Who is the pledge for?

7. Can we pledge if we already provide work experience?

Yes. If you have an existing programme and will be delivering activity this academic year this can provide a strong foundation for the pledge, but employers are encouraged to consider how these opportunities could be amplified to align with the government's ambition for high-quality modern work experience at scale. We're looking to close the gap by adding 200,000 additional work experience opportunities so every 14–16-year-old in England can have access to work experience. Modern work experience encourages flexible delivery models which may enable employers to increase their reach.

8. Can we pledge if we are new to providing work experience?

Yes. Employers do not need a fully developed programme before making a pledge. CEC will support organisations to move from initial ambition to an appropriate delivery model. There is more information regarding the support CEC will provide in question 10 below.

9. Can different parts of our organisation contribute?

Opportunities across a range of teams, sites or regions may be included in the pledge, enabling employers to build a coordinated organisation-wide approach. CEC can support a tailored regional approach by connecting employers with the Careers Hub Network. We would also encourage employers to consider how they might unlock new work experience opportunities within their supply chain and include this within their pledge.



Turning the pledge into action

10. What support will CEC provide after we pledge?

CEC is committed to working with employers to turn the pledge into action. The support offer will include:

- Support to map and understand the employer's ambition and individual needs.
- Identification of suitable models of delivery and ways to extend the scale and reach of work experience opportunities.
- Access to the Careers Hub Network which can connect employers directly with schools and young people who will benefit from the work experience opportunities.
- Sharing best practice and resources to support the practical delivery of modern work experience.

11. What contributes to a meaningful work experience opportunity?

There are a range of models and methods to deliver modern work experience, which vary in intensity. From group workplace visits to individual extended industry placements, we can support you to find the right delivery model for your business. Crucially, when thinking about quality experiences, the core principles for making them meaningful remain the same for all models:

- Establish purpose and agree clear learning outcomes.
- Be targeted. Understand the needs of the young people engaging in your experience, to better tailor to their needs.
- Showcase diversity and offer the chance to meet with a diverse range of employees, ensuring they are relatable role models.
- Make it engaging by enabling meaningful two-way interaction and include hands on learning.
- Provide feedback on any work produced or presented as part of your workplace experience.
- Gain feedback from the young people to support you to evaluate the impact of the experience.
- Consider pre & post work to ensure young people attending are prepared, knowing what to expect and have had enough feedback to reflect on their experience and skills gained afterwards.

Don't worry if this language is new. Once you have pledged, CEC and local Careers Hubs will be on hand to support you to design and deliver work experience opportunities which are meaningful.

Practical considerations

12. How will safeguarding, insurance, health and safety, and administration be managed?

Employers will need to follow the applicable requirements for their organisation, work experience model and participating young people. CEC information and support should help employers understand the practical steps involved, but responsibility for assessing the circumstances of each work experience placement, including any safeguarding and DBS requirements, remains with the relevant school, college and employer. Organisations should make their own decisions based on the specific facts of each case and obtain independent advice where required.

CEC's existing Work Experience Administrative Tasks resource provides a useful starting point.

13. Should I pay a learner on a work experience placement?

No. Work experience activities are part of a learner's programme of learning. They normally take place during school term time and are a great opportunity for a young person to be inspired and learn about the world of work. It is however considered good practice to reimburse reasonable expenses, such as travel costs, lunch, and business attire, particularly when supporting disadvantaged learners. This is voluntary and not a requirement and would always be given as expenses and not pay.

14. What support is available locally?

There are 44 Careers Hubs available to offer support in each English region. Careers Hubs are on hand to provide local, tailored support to schools and employers to enable and facilitate high-quality workplace experiences. CEC can connect you to your local Careers Hub where appropriate and they will ensure that you are guided through all stages of offering modern work experience.

