CREATING A WORK PLACEMENT LOGBOOK TO SUPPORT LEARNER PROGRESS

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

Creating a work placement logbook to support learner progress.

Rationale/outline

Work experience is an essential component of the study programme and it is the glue that binds together all the other components. Without work experience the learner is not being fully prepared for their future goals and their rate of progress will be hindered.

Learners not only gain valuable work skills when on their work placement, but they also develop confidence, manage their behaviour better and become more motivated to achieve career goals and aspirations. The work placement logbook is an essential part of work experience, it captures all these benefits. It can be used to prepare the learner for their next steps as they progress towards their career goals. This resource aims to:

- Help learning providers design a work placement logbook fit for purpose with their own learners in mind.
- Ensure the logbook fulfils all its functions and captures the progress made by learners.

Suggestions on how to use this resource

This resource is best used with all curriculum staff and those directly responsible for work placement arrangements. The flow chart helps staff to reflect on what the work placement logbook is for and how to ensure it meets all its requirements. Alongside this flow chart are a series of referenced links that go into more detail for different aspects of the logbook. These summarise the main points, options and what needs to be done if the logbook is to be a successful record of learning and progress.

- As part of a continual professional development (CPD) event or curriculum team meetings, use the flowchart to check present arrangements and what else needs to be done.
- Use the links as laminated cards to be considered in small groups for discussion to identify actions to be taken.
- Where possible, involve learners and employers in deciding the final format of the logbook.
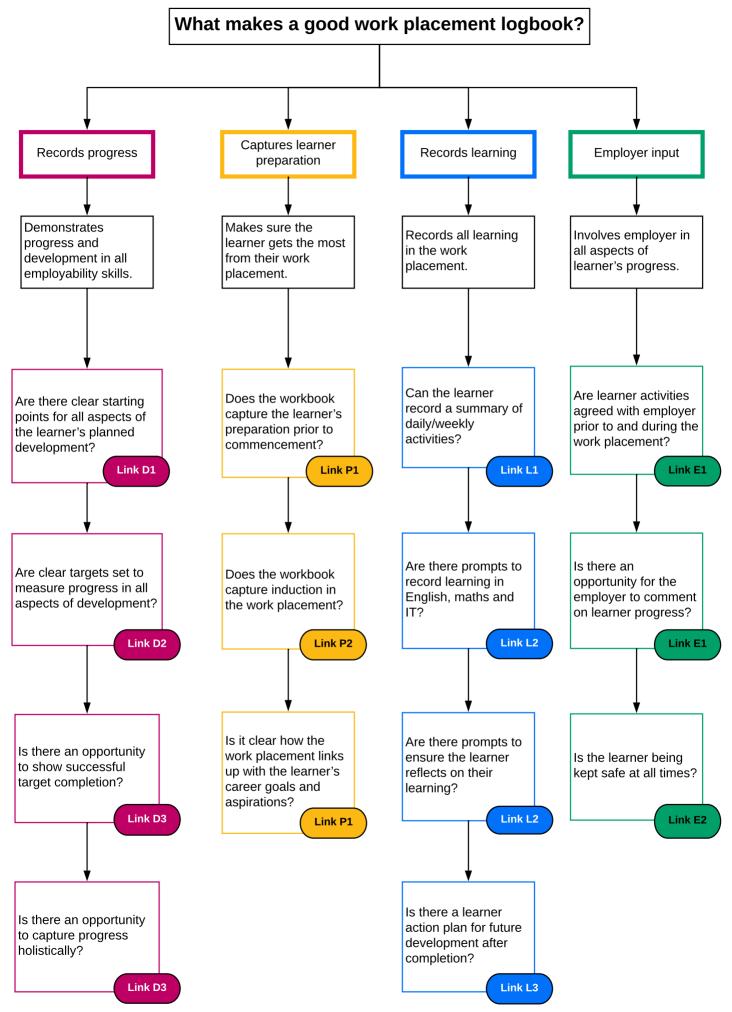
Intended impact

A clear record of the benefits and learning as a result of the work experience and how this impacts on progress towards the learner's main career goals.

A process for full involvement of employers in the work placement process, encouraging employers to see the positives of offering work placements and securing future opportunities for other learners.

An explicit record of how learners use maths and English in the workplace whilst helping learners to see the relevance of maths and English.

Helping learners to understand better the application of theory to practice.

Making the most of a work placement logbook.

What makes a good work placement logbook?

Records progress

Demonstrates progress and development in all employability skills.

Are there clear starting points for all aspects of the learner's planned development?

Link D1

Are clear targets set to measure progress in all aspects of development?

Link D2

Is there an opportunity to show successful target completion?

Link D3

Is there an opportunity to capture progress holistically?

Link D3

Captures learner preparation

Makes sure the learner gets the most from their work placement.

Does the workbook capture the learner's preparation prior to commencement?

Link P1

Does the workbook capture induction in the work placement?

Link P2

Is it clear how the work placement links up with the learner's career goals and aspirations?

Link P1

Records learning

Records all learning in the work placement.

Can the learner record a summary of daily/weekly activities?

Link L1

Are there prompts to record learning in English, maths and IT?

Link L2

Are there prompts to ensure the learner reflects on their learning?

Link L2

Is there a learner action plan for future development after completion?

Link L3

Employer input

Involves employer in all aspects of learner's progress.

Are learner activities agreed with employer prior to and during the work placement?

Link E1

Is there an opportunity for the employer to comment on learner progress?

Link E1

Is the learner being kept safe at all times?

Link E2

D1

Starting points for the learner.

Remember: It is difficult to measure progress if there are no clear starting points for all aspects of the planned development. Capture and record the starting points for all aspects of development. This can be done in several ways:

- Using a self-assessment numbered scale (with tutor support) of where the learner is currently (which can easily be used again during and at the end of the work placement). At one end could be 'struggles to talk clearly and concisely on the telephone when dealing with customers' to the other end 'always clear, polite and helpful when dealing with customers on the telephone'.
- A description of the level of a particular skill such as "makes errors when estimating amounts of paint required for particular task, particularly if measurements are not in whole numbers."
- A score on a particular assessment for a defined skill or set of skills.
- Using a qualification (module or unit of competence) to describe level of skill, such as 'not able to do', 'can do with support', or 'fully competent'.
- A hard measurement such as number of times late or current attendance levels in percentage.

Remember: Always include starting points for personal development and behaviour such as confidence levels, general behaviour and attitudes, team working and showing initiative.

How and where will your logbook capture these starting points?

D2

Target setting for the learner.

Personalise targets for greater impact.

Once areas for development and starting points have been agreed, targets can be agreed. These will demonstrate that the learner has improved from their current position and on their way to performing the best they can. Targets are a very useful tool for showing progress at work.

Remember: Targets must be individual, specific and provide sufficient challenge. They must be clear, measurable and progress in the direction of a learner's full potential.

The nature of the target will depend on the context of the workplace and what the learner is finding difficult about a task. Every learner's set of targets should be different.

The actual time frame for achieving the target can be included or it can be reviewed at pre-arranged times.

What targets will you set for learners to cover all aspects of development to include work skills, English, maths and personal development?

Capturing target completion.

As the learner achieves their target, always make sure there is a record. This could be done by:

- Having room next to each target to record completion (✓) with a date.
- Have a written record of completion as part of a review section.

Also, if a target is not achieved or partially achieved, have a space to say why.

Progress can then be shown very clearly as each target is achieved.

It can be difficult to see the overall picture if you need to search through documentation to find each target and when it is achieved.

Think about ways to capture the progress whilst on a work placement holistically.

You can do this by:
- Putting targets for all aspects of development on one page.
- Using a chart, graph or diagram to capture target achievement.
- Getting the learner to write a paragraph about their achievements.
- Using photographs and work produced to show achievements.

How will you capture learner work placement progress in the logbook?

P1

Preparation prior to work placement.

It is good practice to get the learner to prepare for their work placement so that they can get the most from the experience. This can include a number of activities, some of which will be appropriate to all learners, and some that will be suitable for certain learners:

Completing some research on the organisation to get to know more about their business.	Checking any risk assessments and any aspects that may be a potential health and safety hazard.
Identifying the sort of tasks and activities the learner may be expected to do.	Linking theory to practice.
Researching technical language and mathematical skills that may be required at the work placement.	Reflecting on own strengths and weaknesses relevant to the forthcoming placement.
Researching the personal and social skills required in the work placement.	Asking how does the placement support career aspirations? How will it enhance future opportunities?

What would be relevant for your learners to complete? Where would this go in the logbook?

P2

Initial preparation and induction at the work placement.

All learners should receive an induction at their work placement. There will be minimal requirements from all employers to ensure the learner is safe.

The learner could be tasked with making sure they know about (and record) a variety of relevant topics such as fire procedure, location of first aid box and first aiders, personal protective equipment (PPE) required and risk assessments.

There are other aspects to consider regarding induction content to be recorded for future reference. These can include:

- Speaking to different staff who are responsible for different parts of the business.
- Reviewing the organisational structure, roles and responsibilities.
- Finding out what policies are held on topics such as equality of opportunity, whistleblowing and harassment in the workplace, environmental policies and use of IT.
- Understanding the main customers of the business.
- Researching customer feedback and quality improvement processes.
- Understanding consequences for lateness and poor attendance.

What will be required of your learners and how will they capture these aspects of their induction?

L1

Recording activities and tasks in the workplace.

It is essential that learners keep a record of their learning. Depending on the nature of the work placement and its length, the frequency and method of recording learning may vary.

In deciding how the learner should record their learning, reflecting on the following questions will be useful.

- Should the learner approach this as they would a diary?
- Should the record be arranged by date or by type of learning (e.g. different sections for maths and English, personal & social development)?
- Should there be a minimum or maximum rule for the amount written?
- Will there be a requirement for someone to verify what the learner records?
- Should the learner include any support they have had when completing activities?
- Should the learner refer to any targets achieved as part of their record?

How will you make sure the design and space in the logbook allows for the recording of activities and learner progress?

L2

Prompting learners to reflect on their learning.

Although it is important to have a record of activities due to carrying out different work tasks, learning also needs to be captured. Learners may be skilled in capturing their learning or they may need prompts to encourage reflection on what they have learned. Ideally there should be space in the logbook to allow a record of learning.

Prompts can be brief or detailed, many or few. This will depend on the nature of the learner and work placement. The following are some prompts to use with learners for consideration.

- What did I learn from this activity?
- Did I spend too much or too little time on this task?
- How did I apply my theoretical knowledge in the workplace?
- How do I feel about myself now I've done these activities?
- Do I behave any differently now?

- Did I achieve the target I set myself?
- Would a different approach be better next time?
- How have I used my English/ maths or IT in the workplace?
- How did my supervisor help me to learn from this activity?
- How have my maths and English improved?

What prompts, if any, will you use?

L3

Using learning for future development.

The impact of any learning in the workplace will be strengthened if it is used in the classroom or workshop when they return to their learning provider.

In doing so, it can help learners to:

- Become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses.
- Become more aware of their preferences and interests.
- Make links between theory and practice.
- Plan for further support within the classroom or workshop.
- Share their learning with others.
- Show how they can exceed their previous goals (whether that is to do with grades or quality of work).

Bringing their work placement logbook into the classroom immediately gives it more value and relevance and can be used as a basis for future planning of learning. Learners can be encouraged to complete an action plan and set further targets.

How are you planning to use the work placement logbook in the classroom or workshop?

E1

Involving the employer effectively.

The work placement logbook is not just for the learner but for the employer as well. Without employer input it has limited value and learners will not get the full benefit of their work placement.

Their involvement should include:

Planning and preparation. What arrangements do they have in place to ensure the right amount of coaching and supervision? What learning opportunities are in place to secure progress and development? What are the arrangements for induction?

During the work placement. How will check on learning and spot any need for more support or more stretch and challenge? How will they communicate with the learning provider? How will they comment on/contribute to the learner's own reflection of learning (e.g. possibly at a review)?

At the end of the placement. How will they help to quantify what the learner has achieved on the placement? What will they learn from the placement to change for future learners? How will they feedback to the learning provider about how they feel about the placement?

After the placement. How will the learning provider keep in contact with the employer? How will the provider take advantage of any further input resulting from the placement?

Considering the above, will the logbook accommodate input from the employer?

E2

The employer's role in health and safety and safeguarding.

The safety of the learner is paramount. The responsibility lies with employer, learning provider and the learner themselves.

This is not an exhaustive list, but the following will need to be carefully considered:

- Risk assessments prior to and at the workplace.
- Treating others with respect and tolerating differing views.
- Knowing their rights and responsibilities in the workplace.
- Keeping safe online in the work place.
- Being vigilant and protected from those with extremist views.
- Protection from bullying and harassment in the workplace.
- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Safety rules, the importance of following these and knowing the procedures when there are safeguarding concerns or emergencies.
- Dealing with stress and any worries.

How will you ensure that the responsibility of all three parties is secured and captured in the logbook?