

OUTSTANDING TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT TECHNICAL SKILLS NATIONAL PROGRAMME

Toolkit

Created by Grimsby Institute Group

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Managed by



In partnership with

emfec

Foreword for education providers

This is a guide to hosting teaching staff on placements at an employer's workplace.

It is the output of a project by *The Skills Exchange Network for Teachers* where Further Education tutors were sent into the workplace to perform 'back to the floor' work-placement activities. The project found that staff placements help to improve or create outstanding teaching, learning and assessment (OTLA), and that there are many potential benefits for employers.

The bulk of the toolkit is a guide for employers who are hosting teacher placements, as a way of:

- promoting outstanding teaching, learning and assessment

- preparing for the implementation of the post-16 Skills Plan

- creating and developing effective relationships between employers and education providers

Although aimed at employers, the toolkit is intended to be a useful tool for educators to develop relationships with employers, either as a starting point for collaboration, or as a way to deepen existing partnerships.

Please also refer to the *Skills Exchange Network for Teachers'* Case Study on the Education and Training Foundation website. We hope this toolkit is useful in empowering you to create and extend employer relationships, giving you ideas on how to better plan and manage staff 'back to the floor' placements, and working towards OTLA for your learners.

A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS TO HOST TEACHING STAFF IN YOUR WORKPLACE

Created by the *Skills Exchange Network for Teachers* [v11.1]



This is a guide to hosting teaching staff on placements at your workplace.

A research project was conducted with a number of educators and employers. The contents of this guide is the result of findings about staff placements in industry.

Why bring teachers into your workplace?

The partnership analysed and evaluated the staff placements, and distilled the following:

Teacher 'Back to the Floor' placements are an important part of developing outstanding teaching and learning for their students

[section 1]

Employers benefit when students' skills, knowledge and behaviours better match the workplace

[section 2]

Teacher Placements improve employer/educator relationships and help develop collaborative partnerships. They can help you get the most benefit in preparing for changes in education, for instance the Department of Education's Post 16 Skills Plan.

[section 3]

Students' aspirations are raised by having a more realistic idea of the workplace, and equality and diversity can be promoted

[section 4]

Section 5 is the guide to hosting teacher placements and maximising the benefit of a subsequent 'exchange relationship' for employers, students and educators.

1. Staff 'Back to the Floor' Placements help create Outstanding Teaching and Learning

Staff members engaged in placements within industry in the following sectors:

- Catering and Hospitality
- Creative and Design
- Digital
- Construction
- Hair & Beauty therapy
- Engineering

Over 350 students were then taught by those staff members.

Several staff improved their:

- embedding of employability and industry standards
- use of technology to enhance learning
- promotion of active learning in the classroom
- students' engagement within the lesson being observed

Nearly all students surveyed so far report that their learning experience has been improved this year because of information about employment and the workplace.

We interviewed employers, who agreed that students would have a better learning experience as a result of a teacher placement.

Teachers' view:

Diane runs a training restaurant kitchen, and was able to gain ideas on the use of ingredients, new trends and presentation ideas. For example, she was able to take the knowledge that she found regarding some of the new ingredients (with an Asian influence) and incorporate this into a training restaurant menu for all level two learners to prepare, cook and present on their lunchtime menu.

Garret is a new programme leader for level three professional cookery, so the opportunity was especially inspirational for him to be exposed to food within a Michelin star establishment. Since the visit Garret's own presentation style has improved and is now impacting positively on the learners. This has given them an enhanced outlook on the styles of presentation, in turn is likely to gain them a better chance of obtaining a Merit or Distinction at the end of the year.

Paul now incorporates photographic evidence across the range of lessons and courses offered in catering, as a result of photographing cuisine on placement.

Students' view:

Teigan (Level 2 Cooking)

The tutor showed us a presentation about his recent trip to the restaurant. The tapas restaurant showed imaginative and unconventional presentation. After being shown each of the 14 food courses it not only inspired me but the whole class to think outside the box and question standard presentation. Overall, this was a fantastic and inspiring lesson and we collectively would love to have more lessons on specialised services and products.

2. Employers benefit from students being well informed about industry

Most of the employers surveyed said they regarded vocational education as important to their company

Improved teaching and learning leads to better students, who then enter the workplace with more to offer, either through being better qualified, or from having more information about the workplace.

The employers interviewed said they were now more likely to host a teacher placement in the future. This was because of benefits they perceived to them and to students.

Of the students surveyed, nearly all now know more about their future employment opportunities in the subject, and now know more about what happens in the workplace. All of them would recognise what makes someone really good at this subject area

Employers' view:

Nick (Builder)

The teacher came for a placement and learned the type of things that the next generation of workforce are looking for, and what's important in the business world. It's been quite beneficial for myself, seeing a tutor in our environment.

Teachers' view:

Adam (Digital)

On the placement, there was opportunity to discuss the available opportunities, the state of the employment market, and required soft and hard skills. This will be felt in the curriculum developments for 2018/19 onwards.

3. Placements improve employer / educator relationships and help collaborative partnerships.

An effective relationship between employers and educators will benefit students, helping teachers translate their experience into the learning environment. Discussions between employers and teachers on how exactly this can be achieved leads to outstanding teaching, learning and assessment.

Employers' view:

Nick (Builder)

Our apprentices were given some tuition by the teacher onsite.

Teachers' view:

Paul (Catering)

Being the manager for the department gave me an opportunity to discuss and analyse recruitment with the employer/owner. It also gave me an insight into how modern restaurant function has evolved since I worked in the industry.

David (Catering)

My role is 50% learning practitioner and 50% skills and employability trainer. This means I make contact with employers to create work experience opportunities for learners. I gained extended time with employees to discuss what they look for in new starters, which is adding to how I plan employability, enterprise and pastoral sessions across all levels of each programme.

4. Students' aspirations are raised by having a more realistic idea of the workplace, and equality and diversity can be promoted

When students know more about their intended workplace, they can make more informed choices. Promoting Equality and Diversity in a work placement is a good way to give more information and greater aspirations for students and ensure an employer has access to the whole pool of talent for its current and future workforce.

Of the staff who were observed in the classroom, several were seen to have improved their embedding of E&D from before the placement, and nearly all students surveyed know more about equality and diversity in this subject from taking their class than before.

Students' view:

(Digital)

'I know what applications are used in the workplace'

Teachers' view:

Paul (Catering)

The restaurant service and some of the menu items have reflected some of the dishes from both restaurants, which means all levels have had a degree of impact. We intend on inviting staff from both companies into to discuss the industry with our learners within employability sessions and also create work experience opportunities for them within this and next academic year.

Adam (Digital)

We have developed a relationship with Citizen's Advice and they are keen to set up some kind of formal placement scheme, providing opportunities for students of ours to gain the kind of experience I have had, working in one of the most inclusive environments you are likely to find.

Tracey (Hair & Beauty placement):

Knowledge about male grooming will contribute to a wider curriculum offer, that could attract more diverse students. Developing learner knowledge and understanding of running a business will contribute to raising aspirations.

Section 5: the guide on how to manage a teacher placement

The guide should help employers plan and manage a successful teacher placement. Success would be defined by both the employer and teacher achieving their aims, which should be set out before the placement occurs. A key task for a teacher when they go out on a work placement, is how to 'convert' their experience into the learning environment, by creating outstanding teaching, learning and assessment. Throughout the guide are suggestions on how the employer can help make that happen.



Planning to ensure an effective placement occurs

Timing – getting together to plan a placement

One of the main research findings is that planning is essential to a successful teacher placement. Getting together as early as possible will really help.

Education providers often plan the academic year (September to August) by the previous January. It can be very difficult for a teacher to be released once the curriculum has been planned. Employers also have rhythms throughout the year, for example food production or seasonal sales periods. Teachers may well be aware of this but aligning both 'calendars' may be challenging.

The best way to overcome this barrier would be to schedule placements several months in advance, after considering both the employers and the provider's schedule. Pre-placement meetings can identify mutually beneficial dates or periods when providers have more time available.

Teachers can also advise on when the best times for future student placements may occur and may be able to arrange student assessment around this. For example, a catering company might have particular supply chain requirements in December – students may benefit from attending just before this period (to minimise any potential disruption in the workplace), and providers could schedule assessments for early January that relate to placement experience.

Key Question:

When would be the best time in your business to offer a staff placement? (Consider if there is a specific time in the business cycle, or particular seasonal advantages)

Meeting to set aims and objectives

Employers have said they would generally like a clear set of outcomes for staff placements. This allows less interruption to their business, which is important to them. Teachers will also benefit from clarity to their own aims, making it more likely that they will be able to improve the students' learning experience afterwards.

It would be helpful to have a pre-placement meeting several weeks before the planned placement, or at least a conversation, with the teacher(s) planning to enter your workplace.

Possible aims for an employer will be to:

- gain more knowledge of how their subject is taught locally
- begin a relationship with local education providers
- gain more knowledge about future changes in education
- prepare for accepting apprenticeships, traineeships or student placements for T-levels

Possible aims for an educator will be to:

- work towards outstanding teaching, learning and assessment for learners
- develop skills on presentation and the use of quality ingredients.
- develop their own understanding of service in a shop environment.
- update their industrial competency in order to meet awarding body requirements for constant updating and professional development.
- discuss and evaluate how equality and diversity function in the workplace

A sample agenda for a meeting would be:

- Aims for the provider
- Aims for the employer
- Specific objectives
 - improving teaching and learning for students
 - procedures and workflow to be observed
 - levels of participation (see below)
 - safety and security (see below)
 - inclusivity (see below)

Some teachers' aims and objectives:

Tracey (Hair & Beauty):

To develop skills in barbering and male grooming so that these can be shared with learners.

Toni (Digital)

To ensure that our curriculum content meets the expectations and demands of the current industry and that it prepares students for future industry changes.

Chris (Catering)

To understand the requirements that industry have of a college providing professional cookery qualifications

Key Question:

What aims would be important for your business?

Promoting Equality and Diversity through work placements

Recruiting future employees in a diverse culture will require employers and providers working together to advance equality and diversity, and a teacher placement is the ideal setting.

Bringing educators and employers together is an ideal opportunity to discuss and evaluate how they can both promote fairness and inclusivity. Our research showed us that this should be discussed before the placement. This is because it can be missed during a 'back to the floor' exercise where the focus is on doing things 'the way they are normally done'.

Talking through how to promote fairness and inclusivity allows a joint approach to be formed, which could have real benefits for both. Putting it on the agenda beforehand allows the discussion on how concepts might be applied,

Key Question:

How can you encourage a diverse range of students to work in your industry?

Are there any myths about barriers to your industry that you'd like to put right?

Levels of placement

There are several ways in which a teacher can participate in a work placement:

Observation

Generally, a teacher will be attached to a department, or observe working practices on the 'shop floor'. This may be a way of minimising disruption to working practices but consider that the teacher may not learn as much from just looking.

Observation and participation

Dipping in to help employees, or learning a new skill on-site, is a good opportunity to give a teacher something valuable to take back to the classroom. It may be that in observing the workforce, the teacher may ask to have something demonstrated, or copy an employee's methods.

Problem-solving and set tasks

The most involved and engaging type of work placement is when a common activity is agreed in advance for the teacher to participate in. Ideally, this would be something that will be of benefit to the business. This will allow the teacher to see what really works and motivates staff to engage with the teacher. It won't always be possible to solve the problem in the time available, but good teachers will reflect on this afterwards and transfer the experience to the classroom for the student's benefit (perhaps designing an assessment similar to the task).

Key Questions:

What level of activity is appropriate for visiting teachers in your workplace?

Helping learners gain from outstanding teaching, learning and assessment

This will be the most important part of the placement from the teacher's perspective. One of the more obvious ways in which students will directly benefit from a staff work placement, is from being exposed to better career guidance in the sector.

Consider these questions as a basis for a conversation with the teacher. Students report knowing more about their future employment opportunities when their tutor has been on a work placement.

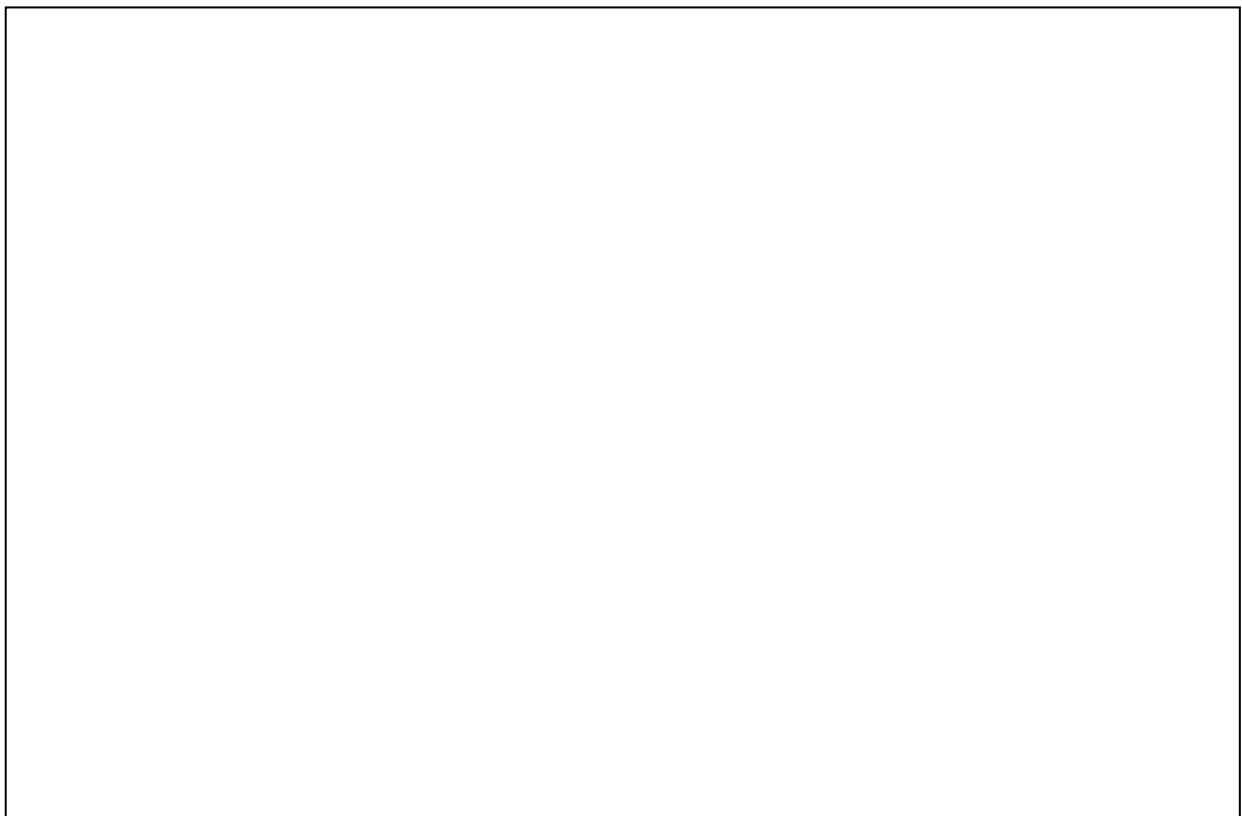
Key Questions:

What would you tell students about your sector?

Are there any myths that need busting?

How could they best prepare for working in your industry?

How would you address their class directly if you could?



On placement

Working practices – a conversation

One excellent outcome of a placement would be the comparison of work practices in your subject area. Often teachers have a certain perceptions of a procedure, or workflow, which can be usefully updated.

A very interesting discussion can be generated by this exercise, which can then be relayed to learners back at the classroom. Ask the teacher how they see themselves doing this – you may be surprised at the techniques a good provider uses to get students involved.

Generally speaking, people can learn more easily when presented with a demonstration, especially when they're able to copy afterwards. Are there things that you can demonstrate to the teacher? Could they copy this in the classroom, helping students see what it's really like to use your industry's equipment?

You might discuss the creation of resources (e.g. dummy lathes, or barber 'heads' for particular hair types) that could be shared between you. Students would benefit from seeing this when they come out on placement, or when a teacher uses it with them.

Key Questions:

What procedures or processes could your employees demonstrate to your teacher?

What might need to be set up in advance to facilitate this?

What might you allow to be taken or loaned from your workplace, for students to interact with?

Safety and Security

Health and Safety regulations will of course apply to teachers on site. This is a great opportunity to discuss any potential issues about placements. Would you have insurance for visitors on-site, or specific risk-assessments? A meeting with the provider would help to iron out potential barriers to be overcome.

Security is crucial for many businesses. Whether to protect copyright, discourage crime, or for personal preference, many employers discourage or ban recording devices in parts of their premises. It's worth having this discussion in the planning phase, so everyone knows what is expected during the placement, but also how modern media can enhance the students' learning experience afterwards.

Key Questions:

Do you have specific requirements for Health and Safety on site? PPE?

Would you need to introduce the teacher to staff beforehand? Are there minimum standards or qualifications they need to have?

What policies do you have in place for technology or recording devices in the workplace?

What could you do to facilitate recording, in order to help students learn about your workplace?

Helping teachers disseminate their experience of the placement

A properly planned placement will help teachers to feedback to their colleagues, allowing more staff to benefit from the experience. This will help more teachers improve their teaching, learning and assessment.

This can be done in a number of ways:

- Staff meetings
- Toolbox talks (informal workshop meetings)
- The organisation of a further visit by a group of teachers
- Formal presentations
- Creation of resources

Key Questions:

What benefit could there be in facilitating a group teacher visit, where a teacher who recently been on placement leads her colleagues around the workplace to give them the benefit of their experience?

How could you collaborate with a teacher in the creation of resources?

Preparing for changes in vocational education: t-levels

‘From September 2019 with a full roll out from 2022), 16-year olds will choose either a technical or an academic route, the first one aimed at skilled employment, and the second for undergraduate study. This is part of the Government’s ‘Post-16 Skills Plan’, where students are to be supported to ‘secure a lifetime of sustained skilled employment and meet the needs of our growing and rapidly changing economy’

(DofE / DofBIS 2016)

Technical levels are partly a response to employers’ requests for a qualification that will address the current skills gap, and more closely match what they want from a useful employee.

To allow a learner to earn a Technical qualification, they must complete around 350 hours of placements with an employer in their chosen sector.

‘To facilitate up to 3 months of meaningful work experience for all students who embark on a T-level programme, much effort in terms of training and supporting employers will be needed’

(Karen Scott, Further Education News).

Hosting a teacher placement can be one of the most important ways of future-proofing a business for changes in vocational education. This is because teacher placements help to improve students’ experience of learning. Furthermore, many lessons learned from hosting teachers can help when organising student placements in the future.

Key Questions:

Which qualifications or changes in education would you most like a presentation from teachers about?

How could you use a teacher placement to help you to prepare for future student placements (based on what you’ve read in this guide, and your own key issues)?

Following up

How staff placements improve employability outside of the classroom

As well as leading to improvement in the students' classroom experience, lessons from staff placements can be passed on in other ways. Good education providers plan for a range of employability activities for their students. For example, Rotherham College have the following system which involves employers:

Tier 1:

CV writing workshops
Employment guidance
Mock interviews

Tier 2:

Group industrial visits
Guest speakers
Skills shows

Tier 3:

Attendance at work experience

Taking part in hosting a range of 'onsite' learning opportunities will give employers much more of an insight into potential future employees and how they are being trained. After a placement, the teacher will be better placed to plan a mix of student activity in advance and may be able to encourage employers to participate in Tier 1 and 2 activities.

A well-managed staff placement will help start a beneficial relationship between the employer and provider, in which they can more usefully plan a curriculum for students, improving their learning experience.

Key Questions:

Which of these activities would be most feasible to engage with in collaboration with an education provider?

Which Tier could you work towards in the short or medium term, and what barriers would need to be overcome to make them a long term addition to your relationships with education providers?

Creating relationships — next steps

In order to develop a relationship with an education provider, or to make an enquiry about hosting a staff placement, it is easiest to make contact with a dedicated 'employer engagement team', or ask for the faculty or department that most corresponds to the employer sector.

Key Questions / Actions:

Which education providers in the local area could you most easily work with?

Make a note here of basic contact numbers and email addresses.

When you're ready to make contact, ask for 'employer engagement staff', or anyone who can talk to you about vocational education, and arrange a meeting to talk about possibilities.

Appendix A: Planning a Placement in your workplace

Please complete parts 1-3 before the placement, and part 4 afterwards.

Part 1: Aims for the placement

What educational or industrial needs do you hope to address with a teacher placement?	
If you have any relevant strategic aims or objectives around education and training, please list them here	
Is this in response to an approach from an education provider?	
What benefits do you anticipate for this set of sector placements:	
for your business?	
for your employees?	
for future recruitment and/or training?	
What barriers to a placement do you anticipate will need resolving? [e.g. security, insurance, timings, PPE and safety, costs]	

Part 2: Pre-placement meeting agenda

Teacher(s) name, provider and contact details	
Subject / area of expertise	
Name of student groups	
Employer rep name and contact details	
Approx. number of employees	
Short overview of the provider (relative size / role in the sector, student demographics etc.)	
Proposed dates for placements (aim for at least 6 weeks' preparation time)	
Placement type (delete as appropriate):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observation only - Observation and limited participation - Participation in tasks or problem solving
<p>What are the aims of the education provider for this placement?</p> <p>Can they match the aims of the employer?</p>	
How does the teacher intend to make best use of the placement to improved students' learning experience?	
How does the teacher intend to pass on advice	

and guidance to students about your Occupational or Employment sector? Discuss this with the teacher	
How will you use your placement experience to advance equality & diversity for students and/or employees?	
Overcoming barriers – discuss here how both partners can ensure the placement is feasible, and beneficial	

Part 3: Proposed Placement details

Teacher(s) name and contact details	
Subject / area of expertise	
Courses and programmes that would benefit from the placement	
Provider liaison name and contact details (employer engagement team)	
Approximate total number of employees	
Short overview of the employer (relative size / role in the sector, main product/service etc.)	
Placement type: Observation only Observation and limited participation Participation in tasks or problem solving	
PPE / Health and Safety notes	
Teacher aims for placement	
Employer aims for placement?	
Draft timetable	

Part 4: Employer Evaluation and next steps

What went well on the placement, from your perspective?	
What could be improved if you hosted another teacher placement?	
List the main 3 things you learned with regard to how providers educate students in your sector	
List the main 3 things you intend to take back to your business to inform to help develop your growth	
<p>What next steps would you like to take? You can liaise with the provider employer engagement team to advance these ideas.</p> <p>(delete as appropriate)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Another placement - Possible student placement - Apprenticeships - A training partnership - Helping to design a curriculum for your sector - Participating in other events for students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guest speaker Mock interviews Hosting group student visits to your workplace Skills shows and events