

INDUCTION

Young people on work experience should receive an induction to the workplace that will help them to integrate quickly and learn about working life. A young person entering the world of work for the first time may not know how it functions and how they should behave. The induction is an opportunity to:

- **get to know the young person**
- **understand their previous experience**
- **talk about the expectations on each side**
- **establish the young person's goals**
- **provide space for the young person to ask questions.**

Therefore, a good induction should include:

- **an introduction to the organisation**, including how the company is structured, and the key people who the individual on work experience will have contact with
- **a tour of the facilities**, including where to get food from inside or outside your building, where the nearest toilets are, first aid facilities and where the fire exits are situated (and any evacuation procedures) as well as health and safety information they need to know (this is a legal requirement)
- **a clear outline of what they will be doing during their time with you** – this should also include room to add in the skills or experience the young person is keen to develop
- **a plan or schedule for the individual's time with the organisation**, clearly outlining what they are doing each day (for example, where they will be in the building and who to meet, and so on).

You could also consider asking the young person to send in a CV before they start so you can find out more about them and help them to feel they're experiencing the real working world.

DEVisING TASKS AND CREATING A WORK PLAN

It is important to give the young person a variety of tasks and if possible rotate them between departments so they get a good insight into the workplace. At EDF Energy, work experience placements involve 'trying' a variety of different roles and tasks in different areas of the business, working with different members of staff, for example, working with the community manager to find new ways of fundraising.

Another way of maximising the young person's exposure to the business is by arranging lunch with different team members each day – from all levels of the organisation.

SUPPORTING THE YOUNG PERSON: SUPERVISION AND MENTORING

Organisations should ensure there is a **dedicated person(s)** with ring-fenced time in their work schedule to supervise the young person on work experience. This would be a good development opportunity for an employee who wants to develop their management capability. In addition, where possible a separate **mentor** or **coach** should be appointed to support the young person more informally.

Offering quality, supportive work experience is simple if you follow some basic guidelines.

- Be clear about how the young person will be **supported, supervised and mentored** during work experience.
- **Assign a 'buddy'** – this role is key to supporting a young person, therefore a buddy should be someone keen to do the role and who has a friendly, supportive manner.
- Ensure the young person is introduced to the **structure of working life**. If it helps, plan a **schedule** to help them see what they'll be doing each day. For example, new young starters at Barclays create a daily timetable with their supervisor to help them understand what they will be involved in and when and where to do assigned tasks.

LEARNING TO WORK

AT THE END OF THE PLACEMENT:

REFERENCE, FEEDBACK AND MOCK INTERVIEWS

At the end of the work experience placement a meeting with the young person should take place to review how everything went, for both the person on work experience as well as the employer. Some students may have a log or diary which they must fill in during, and at the end of, their time with an employer. If there's space to write a comment or feedback, offer to do so.

We recommend that you assess the success of the placement and, if appropriate, offer further support to the individual by agreeing to act as a referee and encouraging the young person to stay in touch.